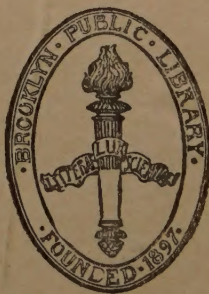




**BROOKLYN  
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

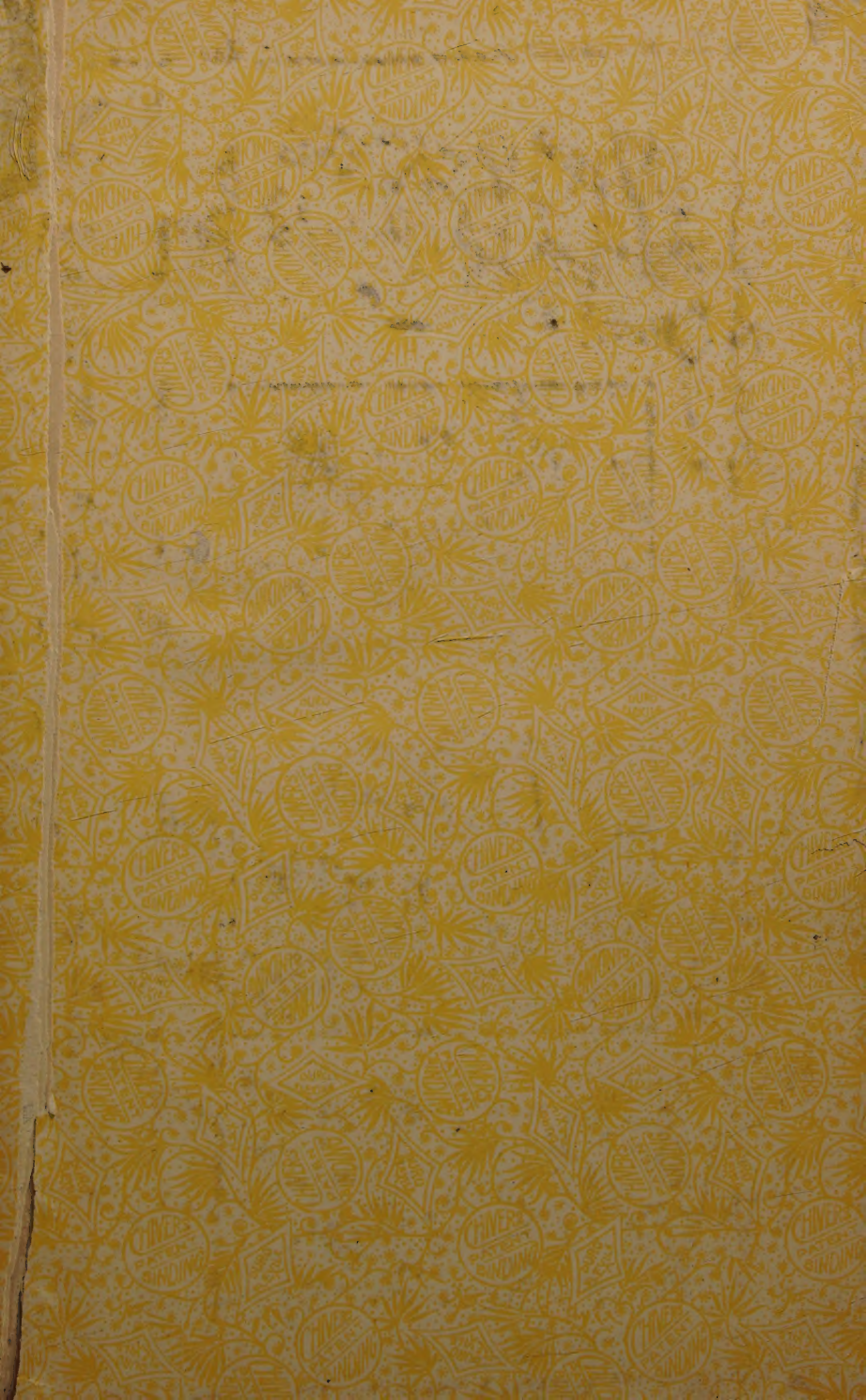
---



---

Form Bo. 140M-1-25 K.&L.













N

MYSELF NOT LEAST





# MYSELF NOT LEAST

BEING THE PERSONAL  
REMINISCENCES  
OF  
"X"



NEW YORK  
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY  
1923

M1871790

1  
B  
V858

Copyright, 1923,  
By  
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

Vivian

*First Printing, October, 1923*

NY 110098  
V858 110098

*Printed in the  
United States of America*



# CONTENTS

| CHAPTER                                | PAGE |
|----------------------------------------|------|
| I. LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL . . . . .   | 3    |
| II. CAMBRIDGE . . . . .                | 24   |
| III. WILFRED BLUNT . . . . .           | 32   |
| IV. IRELAND . . . . .                  | 47   |
| V. LABOUCHERE . . . . .                | 68   |
| VI. WHISTLER . . . . .                 | 75   |
| VII. FLOTSAM . . . . .                 | 87   |
| VIII. BOTTOMLEY . . . . .              | 118  |
| IX. JETSAM . . . . .                   | 145  |
| X. SOME FRENCH ACQUAINTANCES . . . . . | 163  |
| XI. DON CARLOS . . . . .               | 183  |
| XII. BULGARIA . . . . .                | 190  |
| XIII. ROUMANIA . . . . .               | 207  |
| XIV. MONTENEGRO . . . . .              | 219  |
| XV. D'ANNUNZIO . . . . .               | 236  |
| XVI. SERVIA . . . . .                  | 248  |
| XVII. TURKEY . . . . .                 | 266  |
| XVIII. SALONICA IN WAR TIME . . . . .  | 282  |
| XIX. BACKWASH OF WAR . . . . .         | 303  |
| XX. ROME IN WAR TIME . . . . .         | 312  |
| XXI. KAISER WILLIAM . . . . .          | 321  |
| XXII. THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA . . . . . | 327  |
| XXIII. MR. CHURCHILL . . . . .         | 348  |



MYSELF NOT LEAST





# MYSELF NOT LEAST

## CHAPTER I

### LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL

THE origin of my family is lost in antiquity, according to a work of reference. The first member of the family I have traced was an officer in the Roman guard which conquered Britain, and, according to Rehan, another forbear was Governor of Judea and was only replaced by Pontius Pilate because he happened to go on holiday. I have forebears also among the Phoenicians, who colonized Cornwall and developed tin-mines.

My grandfather owned an old unlimited bank which was mismanaged after his death with the result that creditors came down upon my grandmother in her old age and the family seat had to be sold. I can just remember it in my schooldays with its wonderful swards and the woods where I shot my first rabbit and the tidal river which ran into our lovely lake.

A cold register chronicles the third of April, 1865, as the date of my birth. Horoscopes have foretold good health, a long life, success with women, many friends, unlucky speculations, lack of application. But who believes in horoscopes to-day? Especially when they say I am to die on a journey and I know that all of me is immortal?

My father had the odd idea of providing me with

French nurses and governesses; and I was condemned to speak French all the time at home until I was nearly grown up, which had drawbacks as well as advantages. Of course, I was always trying to learn English if only from a spirit of opposition, and some of my mistakes were ridiculous.

When I was sent to school at the age of seven, my broken English exposed me to much teasing, which increased when my mother bought me a sealskin cap. I was nicknamed "Froggy" and "Catskin Lollypops," irreverences that seemed almost blasphemous to a thoroughly spoilt child. We used to gamble for buttons and on the day of the annual excursion I found I had none to my trousers, and I had to run about all day with festoons of string. Skilbeck, Editor of the *Nineteenth Century*, confessed forty-five years later that he had been responsible for this outrage.

I was at Harrow from 1879 to 1883. On the whole I enjoyed my time at Harrow, though I learned very little, scarcely even cricket, which was the supreme fetish. To be able to knock a ball about cunningly was the one passport to influence and popularity.

I visited Windsor as a corporal in the Harrow School Volunteers and recall my first glimpse of the great little Queen crouching in a carriage as we marched past, the grim dignity, most of all the incongruity of this plain figure, alone in a vast park, symbolizing all the power and majesty of the most glorious empire in the world.

At Harrow I found a few to share my interest in politics, always my supreme attraction in life.

In 1881, during one of my holidays, I made the acquaintance of Tom Potter. Potter, a man of huge obesity and good nature, was member for Rochdale, the successor of Cobden, and, according to Gladstone, "the

depository of Cobden's traditions." Whenever a new question arose, he solved it by infinite research in the writings of his late lamented mentor. He plied me with all the publications of the Cobden Club and invited me to spend "exeats" and parts of holidays with him when Parliament was sitting.

"Is it not time for you to be resuming your parliamentary duties?" he would write; and while other boys watched cricket, I sat for hours and hours "under the gallery" on the floor of the House. I became quite an institution there and Potter would bring all sorts of legislators to talk to his "political boy."

One of my most attentive legislators was C. N. Warton, the "Champion Blocker," a great character in that Parliament. I used to take pinches of snuff out of a huge gold box, which had been presented to him by the licensed victuallers of Cornwall, as a mark of their esteem, not long after he had blocked the Sunday Closing Bill for their Duchy. He was a bit of a poet and gave me a parody of, "The good young man who died." I remember only an irreverent refrain about, "The Grand Old Man, who lied, my friends, the Grand Old Man who lied."

Then he had a variety of election stories. There had been a borough where it was usual to give doubtful voters £5 for their support, but on one occasion they struck for £10. This was flatly refused them for a long time, but at last the crafty agent thought of a solution of the difficulty. The men were told that their demands would be satisfied, but that for greater security they would be given only half a ten-pound note then, and the other half after the election was over. This was agreed upon, but when the time came each was told that the other half of his note was in the possession of another voter,



whose name the agent considerably supplied, and that by comparing *notes* they would both be able to secure the market value of their votes and influence.

I never could persuade Warton to tell me the true story of his candidature at Bridport, but the rumor on the subject was as follows. While the Conservative Association at Bridport were still on the look-out for a candidate, a strange gentleman came down to the inn there, took a suite of rooms, and unaccountably fell ill. The Bridport doctor was called in, but all to no purpose. The sick man rapidly grew worse. The doctor persuaded him to make his will, and the Bridport solicitor (who also chanced to be Conservative registration agent for the borough) was summoned to draw it up. By the will large sums of money were bequeathed for public purposes in Bridport, and a substantial sum for the erection of a new Conservative Club there. Soon after this the philanthropist recovered as mysteriously and rapidly as he had fallen ill. But meanwhile his generous intentions had somehow leaked out and the Conservative Caucus unanimously invited him to contest the seat at the next election. The stranger declined the invitation "for family reasons," but took the liberty of suggesting as a suitable candidate his friend, Mr. Warton, whom he represented to be a barrister of striking abilities and great wealth. The Association thought this was just the sort of man they wanted and a deputation was sent up to town to inspect him. After a good dinner and a selection of his choicest stories, the deputation returned enthusiastic about him and he was at once adopted. When the election came on, it was thought strange that the wealthy Warton should want to borrow money for the expenses of the contest, but he explained matters plausibly and it never occurred to anybody to doubt his word—until after the

election. Then it developed that the whole affair was an ingenious trick, and that neither Mr. Warton nor his philanthropic friend had any money to boast of. But the constituency was quite impotent in its fury and Warton never went near it again.

Warton was one of the most self-possessed men I ever met. He would get up in the House of Commons and talk against time upon any mortal subject under the sun, and he would always appear to have a complete mastery of his subject. His voice was harsh and metallic, but he spoke lucidly and nothing ever disconcerted him. He had a peculiar way of interjecting, "Hear, hear!" which always annoyed Gladstone intensely, and which, I believe, he took pains to cultivate on that account. After the dissolution of 1885, he did not seek reëlection, and a year or two afterwards his services to his party during the 1880 Parliament were requited with a lucrative legal appointment in the Colonies.

I heard most of the Irish debates at a specially violent period, and was present when Mr. Speaker Brand illegally closed an obstructive debate, which had lasted several days and included a four-hour speech from Joe Bigger. When the Speaker was asked on what authority he had acted, I heard his reply:

"I acted on my own authority and from a sense of duty to this House."

The Irish all rose and shouted "Privilege!" And were suspended *en bloc*.

I was present also at the foundation of the Fourth Party. "There are two great parties in the State," Mr. Gladstone was saying.

"Three," Parnell interjected.

"Four," cried Lord Randolph Churchill, amid roars of laughter.

I told this incident much later to Mr. Winston Churchill and he included it in his brilliant biography of his father.

Once Lord Randolph was actually brought to talk to the "political boy." That was indeed a red-letter day. He asked me whether I intended to go in for politics when I grew up, and I answered, "Rather!" He said I was quite right as I evidently had enthusiasm, which was the chief thing. "Of course," he added, "politics are more of a gamble than other careers, but see what big prizes there are there."

He explained his many questions about Harrow by saying, "I was at Eton, so I have made up my mind to send my boys to Harrow."

Of course, after my interview, I was an ardent apostle of the Fourth Party and preached Tory Democracy as the gospel of Bolingbroke and Pitt. I wrote to Randolph asking how far a Tory Democrat might go in the direction of Liberalism.

He replied from number two, Connaught Place, on the eleventh of May, 1883: "I do not know what you mean by Liberalism, but if you will be content to substitute the word progress for the word Liberalism, I reply, to any extent, limited, however, by two fundamental provisions: (1) The maintenance of the Monarchy, the House of Lords, the Union between Great Britain and Ireland, and the connection between Church and State. (2) The careful protection and preservation of the rights of property."

I wrote to all sorts of people about Tory Democracy. Gladstone sent me one of his famous postcards. "The subject is to me a difficult one," he wrote, "but I am following it with interest." Labouchere answered that "you might as well talk of black-white men."

I also consulted Randolph about Free Trade, and he wrote that, "Mr. Potter may rest assured that the idols of the Cobden Club will never be disturbed"; a benediction that enjoyed the goodly Potter, who printed it as a leaflet which Randolph said was the most surprising honor he had ever received.

Later on, at Cambridge, Paddy (now Lord) Goulding was Vice-President and I was Secretary of the University Carlton Club, and we decided to invite Lord Randolph Churchill to be President. Our deputation awaited him at his house in Connaught Place late one night, when he was woefully depressed by his difficult fights with Lord Salisbury. As he said to me:

"I was feeling very hopeless, very much alone, terribly young, when your invitation came. Then my courage returned, for I felt it was an encouragement from youth to youth."

In responding to my toast of his health at the annual dinner, he alluded to Potter as my uncle, and said: "It has given me the greatest satisfaction to hear the speech of the nephew of one of my oldest friends. Mr. X has eschewed the avuncular heresies and walks steadfastly and lively in the true political faith."

Next day he lunched with me at my rooms in King's Parade, and remained for several hours chatting with extraordinary charm and vivacity. One of his first questions was, "Does anybody here know young Chamberlain? His father asked me to look him up."

"There he is opposite you," I was able to reply.

Randolph talked much about the House of Commons. I asked him if he had any recollections of Disraeli.

"Yes," he said, "I remember him so drunk that he could only flounder about on the Treasury Bench, wavin' his arms and shoutin', 'British Conshtitushn!' But when he

got up to speak he was in his best form. Gladstone tried to make capital, alludin' to 'the sources of the right honorable gentleman's inspirations.' But the House wouldn't have it at all. There was a chorus of disapproval. It is wonderful how long the House has retained its toleration of drunkenness in spite of the great wave of temperance outside."

One scene he described most graphically, when Sir Richard (afterwards Lord) Cross, an ex-Cabinet Minister, rose from the front Opposition bench and swayed about grotesquely in fruitless endeavors to be articulate. "By Jove, Churchill," Labouchere had shouted across the House, "if he loses hold of that despatch box, he's done for." Randolph had nicknamed this man, "Marshall," old W. H. Smith being "Snellgrove," and he would often call out to Labouchere in a stage whisper, "Marshall's drunk again to-night."

Disraeli, it was said, never came to a meeting without a bottle of the Russian national spirit, vodka, which to the naked eye is undistinguishable from the purest water. This it was the duty of his private secretary, Montague Corry (afterwards Lord Rowton), to mix surreptitiously and place beside him. During an exhausting speech Disraeli would often consume nearly a whole bottle of this spirit, and then Corry had to eke out that remaining as best he could. At one meeting Disraeli turned round in the middle of a sentence and said to Corry in a loud aside, which many must have overheard, "This glass is much too weak; I shan't be able to get on at all."

A Member of Parliament, who knew Disraeli, has since told me that he fortified himself with Burgundy some hours before a speech and sipped brandy and water during its delivery. This informant discredited the theory of vodka, having seen, he declared, the color of brandy



in the glass, which Disraeli's bottle-holder repeatedly refilled. I have also been told that he was in the habit of taking small pills of opium, said to promote brilliancy, just before he got up to speak. This would account for a mysterious movement of the hand, behind the pocket handkerchief, to the mouth, frequently observed at that juncture.

Gladstone did not usually prepare his speeches just beforehand, but often sought diversion of thought by translating a passage of Homer into Italian. Here is an extract from a letter which he wrote in acknowledgment of a copy of a work on the hygiene of the voice:

"No part of the work surprised me more than your account of the various expedients resorted to by eminent singers. There, if anywhere, one might have anticipated something like a fixed tradition. But it seems that we have learned nothing, and I can myself testify that even in this matter fashion prevails. Within my recollection, an orange, or more than one, as a rule was alone resorted to by Members of Parliament requiring aid. Now it is never used. When I have very lengthened statements to make, I have used what is called egg-flip—a glass of sherry beaten up with an egg. I think this is excellent, but I have more faith in the egg than in the alcohol. I have never thought of employing it except on rare occasions, when I have expected to go much beyond an hour."

I have heard that Charles Dickens used to partake, in the intervals of his readings, of a dozen oysters and a glass of champagne; Spurgeon, on the other hand, advised his students to shake the pepper-pot freely over their soup when they wanted a great mainstay to the voice; while Sims Reeves, as a public singer, preferred a glycerin lozenge or a tablespoonful of beef-tea.

Randolph told us of an incident with Sir William Har-

court, illustrating the crudity of manners in the House of Commons: "I had shouted some interruption across the floor, and, in a loud stage whisper, Harcourt cried, 'Little ass!' I retorted with, 'Damned fool.' I shall never forget his expression of amazement and indignation when I said it. He got up two or three times to call the Speaker's attention to the expression, but each time his heart misgave him as he remembered his own share in the controversy. The Speaker told me afterwards that it was the most succinct debate he had ever heard."

Soon after the Aston riots had occurred Randolph's meeting was broken up by intolerant supporters of Joseph Chamberlain; later he gave us a graphic description of the scene, which ended in a free fight with fragments of broken chairs.

"It's wonderful how philosophic one gets about bein' prevented from makin' a speech," he said. There was a time when I should have felt it a personal affront, but now I was rather glad and just thought I should be spared the trouble of preparin' another speech next time."

The Aston riots led to a discussion about Sir Stafford Northcote (afterwards Lord Iddesleigh). Randolph spoke with warm admiration of his gentle disposition and good intentions, which, he said, would have saved anyone from attack, except a leader of Opposition. When Iddesleigh died and malicious gossip invented stories of insults wantonly offered by Randolph, not to speak of silly allegations that Randolph's behavior to him had accelerated his end, the recollections of these remarks enabled me to contradict such falsehoods. Others of the more militant members of the Conservative party were not so tolerant of Sir Stafford's meekness. I remember hearing an instance of their brutal frankness about this time. Sir Stafford's son, Henry, had just been elected a Member

of Parliament, and, when he put in his first appearance at the Carlton, there was some speculation as to his merits. "What do you think of him?" somebody inquired. "He looks weak," replied another. "Well, then, I'll warrant he is legitimate," put in Gibson (afterwards Lord Ashbourne), with a chuckle.

Randolph gave us some delightful reminiscences of his undergraduate days at Oxford. There was a graphic description of a raid upon the garden of a college dean, who by some means or other had incurred unpopularity. Randolph and a party of friends climbed over a wall by night and uprooted every growing thing, broke every pane of glass and turned the favorite flowerbeds into a desolate wilderness. The dean was an ardent horticulturist and as solicitous for the welfare of his bulbs and shrubs as any mother for her children, and his face, when he looked out of his window next morning and saw the handiwork of the future Chancellor of the Exchequer, must have been an interesting study. Of course, there was a huge row and the authorities did their utmost to discover the culprit; but all in vain. Oddly enough, at the very time of Randolph's visit to Cambridge there was a somewhat similar stir over a tree which Gladstone had planted at Newnham, the Ladies' College. The tree was pulled up and destroyed in the night and the old man's admirers were frantically indignant. I believe they employed private detectives and threatened prosecutions for burglary, but the culprit was never discovered and I hesitate even now to divulge his identity.

I heard another story of Randolph's Oxford days from an intimate friend of his. Most undergraduates detest compulsory chapels, and Randolph, being no exception to this rule, was thereby brought into frequent conflict with the authorities at Merton. On one occasion his

tutor sent for him to discuss the matter seriously. It was a chilly day, and the tutor was standing with his back to a cheerful fire when Randolph entered. A somewhat animated discussion then ensued. At the end of ten minutes another delinquent, who was ushered in, found to his amazement that Randolph was standing with his back to the fire and his coat-tails comfortably upraised while the unfortunate tutor was arguing away out in the cold near the door. I always think this is quite the most characteristic story about him, for a man who could subdue the bumptiousness of a college don might be reckoned, like the prophet Habbakuk, capable of everything.

Asked how he prepared his speeches, he said: "I used to write out every word, and then I knew the whole thing by heart; for I have only to read anythin' over once and I can repeat it word for word. Then I had to make impromptu speeches, especially when I was tacklin' old Gladstone day and night in the House. That's where I learned to speak. I was very bad at first, but I had plenty of practice. Do you know, far more people read their speeches than anybody imagines? Harcourt has all his written out on sheets of paper and if he can't have a desk he is done. Watch him the next time you have a chance. The way he juggles with his sheets is worthy of an acrobat or a conjurer. There is no limit to his artifices for distracting your attention when he is goin' to shift a sheet."

He told us how John Bright used to prepare his speeches with most elaborate care and always provided himself with a comprehensive sheaf of notes, if not a verbatim draft of what he had to say. On one occasion a debate arose in such a manner that no one would ever have suspected it of having been premeditated. Presently the old Quaker got up and made profuse apologies for

approaching so intricate and delicate a subject without the possibility of preparation. His opening sentences were turgid and involved; he hesitates and blundered like a bashful novice; his throat seemed parched and the words were uttered with a struggling gasp, so that everyone began to marvel that the famous orator should speak so badly. Presently, however, he was seen to smuggle a thick bundle of closely written papers out of his breast pocket, and from that instant a change came over the spirit of the whole scene; his imperturbability returned to him, the style was once more that of Shakespeare and the Scriptures, and his voice rang forth in its accustomed silvery, melodious tones. He did not make much use of the notes after he had got them, but their possession seemed to make another being of him. Afterwards some young Tory bloods tried to chaff the People's Tribune about the prepared impromptu, but this he vehemently resented for he had a strong vein of vanity, and he never forgot or forgave derision.

After giving instances of the odd variety of communications with which a public man is inundated, Randolph said: "Enthusiastic admirers are sometimes a nuisance. I happen to be a shockin' bad sailor and I remember a frightful channel crossin'. I was as limp as a rag, and a study in green and yellow, when I reached Dover. Then as I crawled over the gangway, more dead than alive, my hand was suddenly seized in a grip of iron by an enormous muscular stranger, who wrenched my arm out of its socket, treated it like a pump handle, and bellowed in my ear, 'Allow one of your warmest admirers to shake you by the hand.' "

Somebody asked him about a rumor that he was about to take office. He shook his head and murmured, "Office is nothin', office is nothin'; I have not thought about



office." However, he must soon have changed his mind, for he shortly became Secretary of State for India.

Following Randolph's counsel that Toryism can go almost any length in the direction of democracy, I invited Wilfrid Blunt to address a meeting of the Carlton Club. He had been standing for Parliament as a Conservative Home Ruler, and was consequently in bad odor with the more conventional sections of the party. When I asked Ashmead-Bartlett (afterward Sir Ellis) to the same meeting, he replied that he would be very glad to come, but could not consent to appear on the same platform with Blunt. Eventually there was a compromise. Ashmead came to the meeting, and I arranged for Blunt and John Dillon to come and speak at the Union.

Ashmead was a flamboyant orator of American extraction, second only to Randolph in request for Conservative meetings, though he was a failure in the House of Commons. He edited an ultra-patriotic weekly called *England*, which brought him to the verge of bankruptcy. And he had a decided gift for dressing up platitudes in a garish domino of eloquence.

A suitable companion was found for him on our platform in the person of Sir Uniacke Penrose-Fitzgerald, M. P. for Cambridge, one of whose phrases I recall:

"Ladies and gentlemen," he cried, with clenched fists raised aloft to the high heavens, "I stand here prepared to shed the last drop of my blood for the union between Great Britain and Ireland, as I did a score of years ago for the cause of the Irish Church!"

Fitzgerald's account of General Fraser's election for Lambeth in 1885 may also be recorded. The General suddenly took it into his head that he would like to get into Parliament and went off to the party organizers to tell them so. They offered him various impossible con-

stituencies, which he would not hear of; and at last he went off in a huff, saying he would find one for himself. Some chance suggested Lambeth, and he was not a bit deterred by the fact that there was already a Conservative candidate in the field, and that the seat was considered hopeless. Every morning in the early dawn he stationed himself on Lambeth Bridge and accosted the laboring men going over for their day's work. "I am General Fraser," he would invariably begin, "and I want to have a chat with you." He knew nothing of electioneering, but he had a breezy, sympathetic manner, and interested himself in everybody's personal concerns, flattered all the women, kissed all the babies, and made himself so universally popular that the rival Conservative candidate was routed within a week; and when Polling Day came Fraser astounded the party organizers by securing a triumphant victory.

Fitzgerald told a story about Randolph, who was not altogether in his good graces. "The fellow regularly bismarcks the party," he said, with a vexed air, as he gave a comical account of a ministerial conclave to which he had been summoned for consultation about some Irish matter. He was ushered into one of the Whips' rooms, a small den containing a table, a sofa, and only one chair. Lord Salisbury occupied the chair, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach sat next the ink-pot on the table, W. H. Smith and another Cabinet Minister were ranged against the wall, while Lord Randolph lay quite unconcernedly at full length on the sofa, never moving when anyone came in, and doing most of the conversation.

When Randolph was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons, I sent my congratulations expressing the hope that he would, at no distant date, become Prime Minister with entire

control over the destinies of the country. Here is his reply:

"Treasury, S. W., August 5th, 1886.

My dear X.:

I am very grateful to you for your kind letter, and I trust that your amiable anticipations may not be disappointed. I hope that you will come and see me when you come to town. Ought you not to be seriously thinking of coming into Parliament?

Believe me to be,

Yours very sincerely,

PANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL.

In the summer of 1886, Nubar Pasha, then Prime Minister of Egypt, spent a few weeks in Switzerland on his way to this country. Happening to be at Vevey at the time, and thinking it a good opportunity to pick up a little information about Egyptian affairs, I sent in my card with a note asking for a few minutes' interview, and mentioning that Lord Randolph Churchill was my friend. The Pasha came down at once and carried me off to have coffee and cigarettes with him in the verandah. He was an elderly, stoutish man, with a huge head, a large white moustache, and a countenance recalling Prince Bismarck's, only gentler and more sympathetic. His forehead was streaked with prominent, discolored veins, like broad rivers painted on a map; his voice was high pitched but not unmusical, and he spoke French with an irreproachable accent. He was a good talker and gave graphic descriptions of scenery and incidents, but on political topics he displayed a baffling reticence. He would assent suavely to every observation, and turn the direct questions with a smile or a platitude. At last, however, I succeeded in extracting a definite expression of opinion from him. I bluntly inquired his opinion of Arabi Pasha.

NUBAR PASHA: "I have none at all."

X.: "*Ca veut dire, Monsieur?*" (What does that mean, sir?)

NUBAR PASHA (almost shouting): "*Ca veut dire, Monsieur, que c'est un infâme, c'est un lâche, c'est le dernier des derniers!*" (That means, sir, that he is an infamous coward, the meanest of mankind.)

Here is an incident of his truly oriental politeness. On taking my leave, I thanked him for the kindness of his reception; whereupon he made me an elaborate bow, saying twice over, "*Mais non, Monsieur, c'est moi qui vous remercie!*" (No, sir, it is I who thank you.)

Blunt was quite interested to hear Nubar's opinion of Arabi, as he was then agitating for some relief or other on behalf of the exile. A few weeks later I heard that the Pasha had described me to a common acquaintance as "*un jeune homme avec beaucoup de moyens.*" (A young man with his wits about him.) And I saw a letter written by a friend of his to my mother, saying, "Nubar Pasha was much pleased with a *very* young Englishman, who came to see him—you can guess who that was!"

Nubar was an Armenian by birth, and, during his tenure of office, knew how to spoil the Egyptians according to all the most approved modern methods. At least Blunt said so. The Khedive was devoted to him and would never have assented to his dismissal if English diplomacy had not forced his hand. On returning from Switzerland I took advantage of the invitation contained in Randolph's letter and called at Connaught Place on the first of September, 1886. I told him about my interview with Nubar and hoped he did not mind my having taken his name in vain. He seemed much amused and said he should ask Nubar about me, as he was to meet

him at Lord Salisbury's next day. We then talked over the debate in the House of Commons the night before. Parnell had brought in a bill for the suspension of Irish evictions, with the House crowded from corner to crevice. He appeared faultlessly got up, in frock coat and white waistcoat, with a large white flower in his buttonhole. At his best he was never an inspiring orator, but on this occasion he added listlessness to hesitancy and a lack of preparation to his usual deficiencies of delivery. All his notes and statistics were in utter disorder and every now and then there were painful pauses during his speech.

The sensations of the evening were provided by Gladstone and Matthews, the Home Secretary, who had obtained office by favor of Lord Randolph. Gladstone spoke with unusual vehemence and amid considerable interruption from below the Tory gangway. He even denounced poor old W. H. Smith in the roundest terms for smiling, when, as a matter of fact, I believe the dear old man was only yawning. Matthews followed, and, as it was his first effort since the country had been startled by his appointment as Home Secretary, his speech attracted some curiosity. There was none of the bowing and scraping and jesuitry which were afterwards associated with his oratory. It was an unsparing broadside, raking the front Opposition bench fore and aft. Randolph, now Leader of the House, sat beside him, and from my favorite seat under the gallery I could see him rocking himself with delight as each shot told. He shouted and applauded like a schoolboy, with so much zest that I expected him every minute to jump up on the Treasury Bench and give Matthews a hearty thump on the back. Gladstone, on the other hand, was visibly disturbed; he rose frequently to interject corrections, he called out noisy contradictions across the table, and finally



marched out of the House in disgust before the speech was half over.

"Matthews made a splendid speech that night," Randolph said to me.

"Yes. I saw you seemed to enjoy it."

"What! Were you there?" he laughed. "It was certainly great sport. I never saw the old man in such a rage. Poor Matthews didn't know what on earth to do. He turned round in the middle of it and asked me whether he should go on, as old Gladstone seemed so angry. I said, 'Yes, yes; all the better, go on; pitch into him as if he were Dilke.'"

Randolph leaned back in his armchair and half closed his eyes and I heard him muttering, "The brute! the old brute!" as he reflected upon his dislike for the old parliamentary hand, who, much later on, I was successful in renaming "the old parliamentary leg."

To understand this story it must be remembered that Matthews was the counsel engaged against Sir Charles Dilke in his divorce case and that the cross-examination was especially severe.

Sir Charles Russell (afterward Lord Russell of Killowen) was very fond of relating this scene and Matthews' philippic against Gladstone, giving a droll description of Randolph's immense enjoyment of the whole performance. When I met him at Blunt's house he listened to my supplementary narrative with grim disapproval.

Both there and subsequently I had many opportunities of meeting Russell, and I have never quite made up my mind whether or not he was a good talker; he was certainly a great one, being voluble and versatile in the choice of subjects, but he never encouraged conversation in others. He did not exercise his art of drawing people

out in private life, presumably reserving that for his witnesses, and when he talked, no dog was at liberty to bark. He was inclined to indulge in reminiscences, most of which were entertaining, some too diffuse.

Someone having remarked half jocularly, that the old prize fighting days were much to be regretted, he launched forth into lively recollections of the ring, about Tom Sayers and the old champions and the enthusiasm which the sport used to evoke. He had always been an ardent boxer and even now he would often put on the gloves with his sons, although they were really getting too strong for him.

"Had he ever had occasion to use his powers in earnest?" I asked.

"Why, yes," he replied, with a chuckle. There was one occasion he remembered very well, as it nearly landed him in a serious pickle. He was a young man at the time, and used often to dine out at some place or other, coming back by the last train. One night he reached the platform just as the train was beginning to move off and a fool of a porter tried to stop him. But he was not going to stand that, as missing the train would have meant a twenty-mile walk through rain and darkness. He gave the man one chance but he would not let go, so there was nothing for it and he felled him with one blow to the earth, gripped the door handle, and just managed to swing himself into the carriage before the train whizzed into a tunnel. At the next station, however, he found a whole posse of railway officials and policemen looking out for him, and I am not sure he was not put into the lock-up for the night.

Russell was proud of his Irish extraction and related a number of Irish anecdotes, imitating the brogue delightfully. Their point lay mostly in his way of telling them,

but here is a sample. It was an illustration of the courtly knack of turning compliments, inborn among Irishmen, always natural and spontaneous. An Irish girl was taking a walk with a young priest and a son of Sir Charles, one on either side of her. They were talking of some famous English beauty and the girl made a disparaging remark about her own countrywomen, saying that beauty had died out in Ireland since the English conquest.

"I don't think it has died out altogether," said the young priest slyly, "I fancy I have seen beauty in this country fully equal to any you can find across the channel, but that, Frank—*is between you and me!*"

## CHAPTER II

### CAMBRIDGE

WHEN I reached Cambridge all my would-be smart friends urged me, for Heaven's sake! not to join the union. Why, it might interfere with my election to the Pitt Club! As though I cared twopence for that!

I found the Union greatly excited over a scheme for the erection of new buildings, a scheme fathered by Austen Chamberlain and vehemently opposed by a man named Fish. Chamberlain was specially annoyed because he heard that Fish went about telling people their votes would count double if they voted against, as a two-thirds majority was needed for the proposal.

"Why on earth should he?"

"Oh," said Chamberlain, "he wants them to think they will be more important if they vote against."

I don't believe Fish ever said anything so silly, but the annoyance illustrates Chamberlain's psychology. As he showed by the perpendicular back of his head, he had no imagination, and certainly was not clever, for after working like a nigger at his history books and never missing a lecture he succeeded in securing only a second class in the tripos.

I rather liked him in spite of his pomposity, but he had few friends and was unpopular with men who did not know him. They went about whispering that he was an atheist and a dreadful Radical.

The charge of atheism was due to his obtaining leave of absence from chapel on the ground that he was a Uni-

tarian, whatever that may be. But he was certainly not a blatant atheist. I have heard him express disgust at blasphemy and he was very cross with an undergraduate who thought it funny to rebind his bible with the title,

*POEMS AND FABLES*

*By*  
*GOD*

As to his Radicalism it was merely, so to say, a phonographic record of the politics of his father, whom he adored. He told me with delight how Lady Dorothy Nevill had said to Joe, "You are a very dangerous man, Mr. Chamberlain, but we are not a bit afraid of you, for all the snobs are on our side." He was also fond of relating how he had overheard some men abusing Joe in a railway buffet. Not reflecting that public men are always exposed to public criticism, he had stopped munching his bun and hotly protested that he would not listen to such talk about his father; and he thought it very hard that the men had received his championship with laughter.

Austen told me also how his father spent a few days with Sir William Harcourt in May, 1888, and thrashed out the whole Irish question with him. As Joe was going away the visitors' book was brought out for him to write his name and he was beginning to squeeze it in at the bottom of a page, where there was scarcely any room, when Harcourt stopped him, and said jocularly, "Come now, Chamberlain, after all I have said the least you can do is to give me an earnest of your good intentions by turning over a new leaf here." But Chamberlain affected not to hear him and obstinately went on writing where he had begun. "I stick to my old side, you see,"



he said dryly, and then they parted and he went his way.

Austen did not often unbend, but I remember one night in Green Street, where he had rooms, he and Morison (afterward Sir Theodore) became quite lively. They suddenly seized me by the arms and tried to frog-march me, whereupon I clutched at all the door-bells as we passed; there was a frightful hullabaloo from the inhabitants and we were nearly caught by the proctors.

His speeches at the Union were fluent rather than impressive, but his Birmingham accent gave a certain piquancy to some of his stories. One was about an American who lived close to Niagara Falls. A gushing Britisher came to him one day and tried to arouse a little enthusiasm in him about the beauty and grandeur of the Falls, but for a long time the man only shook his head and spat meditatively. At length, he had to say something in self-defense. "Waal," was his remark, "it's a powerful big concern, and I grant you it might be very fine, but I really can't say very much for it considering the poverty of the element." This he applied to one of my orations.

A few of his rare Cambridge friends were invited to Highbury. One of them told me how the butler came round before dinner with a tray of buttonholes. Thoughtlessly but sacrilegiously, a guest was about to lay hands on one of the orchids, but the butler drew back in horror and protested with an awe-struck whisper, "Beg pardon, sir, but those are for the family."

Edward VII's eldest son, Albert Victor Christian Edward, Duke of Clarence, commonly called "the Pragger," was of my year at Cambridge, a simple youth in a silk gown. His simplicity was the topic of many stories. The Pragger had not many friends and those he was allowed to consort with were judiciously selected for him

by responsible authorities out of a somewhat priggish set. I remember hearing a rather nice little story about one of these favored individuals, which tickled me at the time. He was kindly opening a bottle of soda water for infusion in the royal brandy and a cork proved provokingly recalcitrant. Thereupon, His Royal Highness volunteered some rather obvious suggestion, to which his friend petulantly retorted, "Teach your grandmother." Hardly had the phrase escaped him when its full meaning dawned upon his mind, and he grew pale with horror at the Majesty of the Name he had called up, much to the merriment of the Prince himself and those who were with him.

The Pragger went one evening to Oscar Browning's rooms, which were a trysting-ground for all the celebrities and oddities of the university. According to a current story, O. B. had for months been making fruitless efforts to obtain an introduction and was in despair. Then, one afternoon, as he was riding along the King's Parade on his tricycle, he saw the Prince coming along unattended and exclaimed to himself that now his hour had arrived. Accordingly, he contrived to upset his tricycle and remained struggling on his back like a beetle until the Prince good naturedly came and turned him over. Then he announced that he was Mr. Oscar Browning, the Senior Fellow of King's, and invited his good Samaritan to come to see him on Sunday evening at his rooms.

These rooms were very cozy and cheerful: books of every kind in each of them from floor to ceiling; several lovely bits of statuary picked up for a song in Italy; choice line engravings, dainty bronzes—in general effect that atmosphere of refinement and cultured ease which we associate with academic circles. What O. B. professed to be proudest of was, however, his bathroom, which he

exhibited delightedly to all arrivals. When the Prince came he was, of course, taken there by his host. As they entered I saw an odd look in Leo Maxse's eyes. "Now, sir, you will understand how I look forward to Saturday night," O. B. was explaining, when Maxse crept up stealthily, locked them in and pocketed the key. O. B. was very angry, but the Pragger took the joke in good part, though the imprisonment lasted a considerable length of time.

Both Maxse and Raleigh (afterwards Professor Sir Walter) were very "precious" speakers at the Union. They devoted much midnight oil to preparation and had many rehearsals with their friends, who attended with full fore-knowledge of the precise moments for applause. The worst of Raleigh was that he persisted in laughing at his own jokes a full minute before he delivered them.

Maxse doted on "rags." Though a weakling in health and always ghastly pale to the lips, he had hands like vises and when anybody visited him in his palatial rooms at King's he would soon announce, "Now I am going to grasp your stomach." That was a painful process and I found the only way to counteract it was by snatching at his table-cloth and ornaments and pulling everything to the floor.

I used to stay sometimes with him at Dunley Hill, his father's place near Dorking. Admiral Maxse was eccentric and lovable. George Meredith, his *fidus Achates*, or blood brother, made him the hero of one of his novels. I met Meredith once or twice in the neighborhood. He used to take long drives with old Mrs. Drummond, widow of an Irish Chief Secretary, and, instead of conversing with her, he impersonated the characters of forthcoming books and made them talk all the time. He boasted that he lived his characters, and that may explain why he did

not shine in company. "The Egotist" must have been an autobiography.

The great personality of the Maxse household was a German ex-governess who remained on as companion to the beautiful daughters. She was the rudest person I have ever met in my life, and her rudeness was regarded as the best joke in the world. Whenever a fresh visitor was expected, all would be agog to hear what awful insult she would have in store for him. I was one of her chief butts, but I came off lightly in comparison with Willie Peel (now the second Lord Peel), for whom she reserved her bitterest gall, though, beyond a little woodenness, there was no harm in him. I have always thought that she must have been the cause of Leo's implacable hostility towards the Huns.

Most of the dons at Cambridge were commonplace. Thompson, Master of Trinity, was also a master of self-conscious dignity. In appearance he resembled the bird of a lectern, suggested rather a bird of prey with its hawk-like nose and a sort of wing of white hair over his rugged forehead. He was one of the few picturesque old men of the day, tall and erect, recalling a Prince-Bishop of the middle ages as he walked up the chapel-aisle, leaning on his staff.

A favorite story with him was his discomfiture of an undergraduate when they both took shelter under a tree in a storm.

"I think it will pass over soon, sir."

"All communications to the Master of Trinity must be made through the tutors."

Such was his propensity for snubbing that he could not resist telling a Prime Minister who offered him a bishopric that he preferred his present position, as there were many bishops in the country but only one Master

of Trinity. He had a great contempt for St. John's College, and once when someone asked him how he accounted for the falling off in entries there, he solemnly replied that it must be due to the increase of emigration among the lower orders. This remark was made without moving a muscle of his face, but, doubtless, in the devout hope that it would be widely repeated.

The Chaplain of Trinity College was a man named Borissow, who was very proud of his voice. He had only one eye and much merriment was aroused when he advertised in the *Cambridge Review* for a "single resident pupil." One day when he was preaching in Trinity Chapel a strange scene occurred. There were seats for undergraduates in a remote recess, which went by the suggestive name of "Iniquity Corner." When Borissow's stentorian voice gave out the text it occurred to the occupants of this corner that a little recreation might be safely indulged in. One of the preacher's rhetorical artifices was, however, to deliver a passage in his loudest tones and then to create an effect by the silence of a sudden pause. When he first did so he was startled, in fact everybody was startled, by hearing the one word, "Nap," loudly, triumphantly and discordantly issue from the uttermost recesses of the chapel. From that time forth "Iniquity Corner" was railed off and left untenanted.

The vogue of such crazes as Esoteric Buddhism and Spirit-rapping during my residence at Cambridge afforded many other examples of eccentricity. For instance, there was Ernest Debenham, a dear friend of mine at Trinity, whom I have now almost forgotten. He had a little silver image of Buddha on his chimney piece and recited prayers in Pali to it night and morning. Great curiosity was aroused by these devotions, but he would never tell



us whether they were performed on one leg in orthodox oriental fashion or whether he had a private ritual of his own. One night he took some hashish (a compound of Indian hemp) to discover whether it would enable him to project his astral body across the court; but he swallowed so much of it that a doctor had to be sent for, and three friends spent the night in walking him up and down the cloisters, to prevent his sinking into a sleep that would know no awakening. I hear he is now a prosperous draper in the neighborhood of Oxford Street.

### CHAPTER III

## WILFRID BLUNT

WHEN Blunt and Dillon came to speak at the Union I was rather alarmed about them. Michael Davitt had just been to Oxford and the undergraduates had screwed him up in his rooms as a protest against the presence of a convict for treason-felony. However, I was able to use my influence with my Conservative friends and nothing happened to Blunt and Dillon. I obtained rooms for them in College and they had a good hearing at the Union. Dillon's emotional appeals must have made many converts to Home Rule among emotional youths. Blunt, with his humming and hawing and gasping and stuttering was the worst speaker I ever heard, except perhaps Shaw Lefevre, Lord Eversley; but fires of enthusiasm burnt through the ice of his manner. As a rule, he remained perfectly silent in private conversation; but if his special topic was started, he at once became a genial, excitable and entertaining companion. The two bees in his bonnet were the "emancipation" of subject races, especially in Egypt and Ireland, and the superiority of oriental over western ideas.

He had traveled in Arabia with his wife, Lady Anne Blunt, granddaughter of Lord Byron, the poet, and according to her diaries, "A Pilgrimage to Nejd," she had been left shamefully on the ground by him when a raiding party of Arabs chased them in the desert. After the Egyptian rising he had spent his own money in briefing A. M. Broadley to defend its ringleader, Arabi Pasha.

Broadley was afterwards the object of disgraceful charges and had to leave England at the instigation of Edward VII. But he was a clever barrister and secured Arabi's exile to Ceylon instead of the hanging he deserved.

After his visit to Cambridge Blunt asked me to Crabbet Park, his beautiful place near Horsham. The house was not very old, but it had a minstrels' gallery and an old-world atmosphere. There was a glorious undulating park with a lake, and he had a stud of almost human Arabs. Somebody had tried to get up a race for Arabs at Newmarket, but, as Blunt's coachman told me, they were no good for five furlongs or even three miles. If you could have had a ten-mile or a fifty-mile race for them over the desert they would have won in a canter. They could stay forever, and if you crossed them with English thoroughbreds you got useful results in the third or fourth generation. Blunt used to drive four of them over to the Derby every year, usually before they were broken in, but the prices were poor at his annual sales. However, they served to advertise his orientalism.

"I began buying Arab horses for my own pleasure," Blunt used to say, "because I thought it would be an interesting thing to do. It was much on the same principle that I bought a house at Damascus when I knew I should never go near it. But it cost only £200, and I thought it was a great thing to be able to say I had a house at Damascus. In a similar spirit I still ride camels when I stay at my garden near Cairo, though I dislike them more than any other mount. No, I don't dislike them because they make me sea-sick. That is a popular superstition about camels. I never met anyone who had been sick from riding a camel. But they are very difficult to sit, and when they do kick it is far more troublesome

than when a horse does so. I think the worst experience I know is being run away with by a camel. You have very little control over one at the best of times, and are peculiarly helpless when he runs away."

All of which is typical of Blunt's whole career. There was no eccentricity he would not boast about. He told me quite seriously that he had been an expert bull-fighter in his youth. I imagined him the understudy of some famous *espada*, strutting round the ring while frenzied crowds huzzaed and black-eyed beauties flung floral tributes in recognition of his heroic thrusts. But I learnt afterwards that the extent of his prowess had been to join in the sport of calf-baiting, or *novillos*, when sprigs of the nobility jump into the ring and tease the animals with little danger to themselves.

Then his championship of "distressed nationalities" was a similar pose. Because Byron had busied himself with Greek insurrections against the Turks it became a poet's second duty to foment rebellion everywhere. The Arabs were a picturesque people.

Lady Anne was a shriveled and austere little woman with a bulldog chin and a pertinacity that would have dominated any husband but Blunt, who defended himself by simply not listening to her. Their daughter, Judith, now Baroness Wentworth in her own right, was a meek flapper, who used to beat me at chess; she bred prize Blenheim spaniels, and was the apple of her parents' eyes. When she grew up and quite an eligible young man seemed to aspire to her hand he was forbidden the house because the "heiress" must look very much higher. Little did anyone imagine this prim maiden would ever divorce her husband and engage in litigation with her father about the ownership of the horses.

Blunt scented and found a disciple in me. I was young

and impressionable enough to believe all his fables about the wrongs of Egypt and Ireland. He told me that if I wanted to get on in life I must join a party—it didn't matter which—and stick to it, right or wrong. If I wanted to do some good in the world I must have principles and look forward to nothing but failure. As he said, he had always been a failure, and he proposed that I should join him in looking for trouble and become his private secretary. This at any rate was a foothold on a political ladder—a very crazy ladder—but he was confident that he would soon enter Parliament and found a party of his own, a sort of Fifth Party, and I had visions of myself as Don Quixote, M. P. at a very early age, with a Premier's bâton in my knapsack. At any rate, my duties were to consist merely of spending every week end at Crabbet.

Indeed, he told everybody he would be in the Cabinet in a few months, leader of his own party next year, and Prime Minister soon after. This without organization or party funds or the most elementary knowledge of home politics! He had not formed opinions even about the suffrage, or free trade, or taxation. He was a Papist and an avowed ill-wisher of England. But *mektoub!* as the Arabs say—it was written! And if Fate failed him, he could still depend on his invincible genius.

Of course, there were flies in the ointment; Blunt could be very dull and Lady Anne nagged—but I met plenty of politicians and there was lawn tennis all day on Sundays, which seemed delightfully wicked after a Sabatarian boyhood. At home I had been restricted to Noah's arks and pious books on the Lord's day, and schools were not much more indulgent.

Blunt's most successful topic of conversation was nat-



urally himself. I remember one tale which he told with delightful assurance, somewhat as follows:

"On our way along the road to Tunis we had a disagreement with the conductor of the diligence which passed us; and this did not improve our tempers, which had already been severely tried by the fatigues of a desert march. So I registered a vow to pick a quarrel with somebody; and when we came presently to a low grog-shop, kept by a Maltese, I managed to carry out my threat and gave the man a box on the ear. Then we went our way, but soon were overtaken by the gendarmes and requested to make a *demi-tour* with them. They took us to the brigadier, who was very civil, apologizing for having to draw up a *procès-verbal* against us. He suggested, as a compromise, that we should pay the man a few francs, which I should have been glad to do, and depart. However, the Maltese would not hear of this, saying he did not want money—he wanted justice! '*C'était un soufflet très bien appliqué*' (the blow was well applied) he repeated more than once. So they drew up a *procès-verbal*, and I was cited to appear before the Court at Tunis on a given day. But the brigadier informed me with a smile that there was nothing to enforce my attendance, and that I must please myself about appearing. Accordingly, we departed for England and I wrote to the judge regretting that a previous engagement prevented my putting in an appearance. Then the case was given against me by the Court and I was sentenced to some months' imprisonment as well as a fine. Well, but the best of it all was," Blunt went on, shaking with laughter, "that by the law of the country if a fine is imposed somebody has got to pay it, and in this case, as I had escaped, the wretched Maltese had to pay it himself. Thus he got 'justice'!"

The standing dish at Crabbet was the Pollen family. There was John Hungerford Pollen (ex-private secretary to Lord Ripon), the paterfamilias, with a telescopic white beard that went down to the skirts of his clothing or was rolled up like a mat or disappeared inside his shirt; kind, matronly, managing Mrs. Hungerford Pollen; Arthur Hungerford Pollen, who hoped to win the All Souls Scholarship (or was it a fellowship?) for the cleverest and most popular undergraduate at Oxford; Sub-Lieutenant Habbakuk Hungerford Pollen—I forget the names of all, as they were countless as locusts in an oasis of Ethiopia. Mainly I remember that they were all said to be “very clever.” They pervaded and dominated everything until one fine day there was a sudden quarrel with Lady Anne and Crabbet saw their clever faces no more.

Arthur Hungerford Pollen did not secure his All Souls emolument, but he filled Crabbet with all his cleverest and most popular friends; and oh! how weary one grew of the talk about their cleverness—which began and ended in talk. I remember Lady Arthur Russell disparaging Arthur Pollen to me.

“But isn’t he very clever?” I objected.

“H’m, I don’t call it clever to have that manner,” she summed him up with a smile.

His chief undergraduate friend, Hilaire Belloc, was certainly clever, a little irritating, perhaps, with his omniscience and verbosity—I was always afraid he would talk the hind legs off Butterfly, the mother of all Judith’s spaniels—but he was quite a tonic in small doses. He was half French, talked broken English, and was consumed with admiration for all things French, even the French revolution. He used to write me letters dated the fifteenth Vendemiaire or the fourth Nivôse. When

he became a Member of Parliament his honesty was his undoing. He disgusted the politicians by telling the truth and he was unwise enough to blaspheme the idols of Jewry.

If King Nicholas was the father-in-law of Europe, Blunt might have called himself cousin of England. He claimed relationship with almost everybody you could think of—the Wyndhams, the Balfours, the Bourkes and about half the peerage. And this was odd as you can find no Blunt pedigree and he owed most of his money to iron railings or foundries. However, all sorts of interesting people came to Crabbet and his "Crabbet Club" was a delightful affair. Never was there such a club since the days of the Hell Fire Club. The meetings took place at Crabbet and you were a member so long as Blunt chose to invite you. The motto was "Youth and Crabbed Age," for no reason except the pun.

A tennis tournament lasted all day and an uproarious banquet was followed by fantastic proceedings. Ladies were strictly excluded, though I believe Lady Anne and her friends sometimes eavesdropped from the minstrels' gallery. There was a rule that anybody who dared to get married, or take office in a government, or do anything really serious during the year, must submit to cross-examination and reëlection. There were mock trials with fantastic penalties and everybody had to do something, make a speech or recite a poem or make himself ridiculous. I remember George Wyndham dancing a can-can very gracefully on the dinner-table without breaking a single glass. And all the songs would not have passed the censorship of the County Council. Later on, when I was abroad, I heard that Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas (another "cousin") had been invited to

the revels, though I had warned Blunt that Wilde was on the brink of a scandal.

Blunt used to come down to dinner in the flowing robes of an Arab sheikh, a present from a Prince of Nejd; and he looked quite picturesque with his silky brown beard and aquiline nose. As a "good Moslem"—one of the affectations with which he vexed his wife's fervent Popery—he was a strict teetotaller, though he kept an excellent cellar with marvelous madeira for his friends. Lady Anne used to spend most of the day with her daughter Judith playing the violin in a remote wing, while he hammered out love-sonnets in his library. He was not a bad minor poet; but he certainly had no divine afflatus, if one may judge by the way he sought inspiration from a rhyming dictionary. When Blunt was candidate for Deptford, Mr. (afterward Justice) Darling read the "Sonnets of Proteus" to a meeting—passionate declarations to "Daphne," raptures over "Chloe's" perfumed hair and other rhodomontades. And after the rude giggles had subsided, Darling exclaimed dramatically, "See what a life the man has led!" I am not sure that this did not turn the election. It was very unfair, but very funny, when one recalled the mechanical side of Blunt's muse.

Blunt did write a very pretty poem about a Persian cat (or was it a Cheshire cat?) "lapped in fur," but my favorite is:

I love the hunting of the hare  
Better than that of the fox,  
The sweet morning air  
And the crowing of the cocks.

Wherever he went he carried a huge morocco despatch box, with W. S. B. in large gold letters on the lid, as witness that he was a statesman; and he carried an

Arabian prayer-carpet over his arm to show his orientalism. It was in this old carpet that the body of this singular, honest, ill-balanced man was buried in his garden in 1922—a crowning of his eccentric life by his leaving it with a posthumous pose. As a friend of Egypt he cultivated the silence of the Sphinx; he would sit for hours in company without opening his mouth; and election committees found him far from an ideal candidate. Like the silent parrot, he must have kept up a “monstrous thinking” as he sat back caressing his silky brown beard with a pocket-comb. No wonder Mrs. Asquith thought him the most beautiful man she had ever seen.

Then somebody told him he resembled Parnell, and he plunged into the Irish cause.

He still professed to follow Lord Randolph Churchill, who was then supposed to be coquetting with Home Rule. Indeed, everybody believed Randolph had up his sleeve a plan for dishing Gladstone over Ireland, much as Peel had dished the Whigs over Free Trade. But I have Randolph’s own authority for denying this. “How such an idea ever got about is utterly incomprehensible,” he said to me at Connaught Place. “Never have I said a word or written a line to encourage such a thing. Never in my wildest dreams have I entertained such a crazy notion. Never, never, never!”

Meanwhile Blunt was drifting further and further on to the political rocks, dragging me in his wake. Looking over old letters, I have lit upon the following and am struck by the similarity between Randolph’s handwriting and that of his still more brilliant son:

Floors Castle, Nov. 2, 1887.

My dear X.:

I was glad to hear of your welfare and present pursuits and read the enclosure in your letter with much interest. I am very



sorry that Wilfred Blunt's ability, enthusiasm and imagination have been captured by that very indifferent set of persons who are now disturbing Ireland.

Yours very truly,

RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL.

Shocking speaker though he was Blunt started tub-thumping in a country where every man, woman and child are born orators. He persisted in holding a meeting at Woodford in a proclaimed district, and a Resident Magistrate sentenced him to two months' imprisonment. It was thought that his friends and "cousins" in high places would never allow him to serve his sentence, and he did receive an intimation that if he would say he was sorry and promise not to do it again he would be let out at once. But he refused to become still more ridiculous. Indeed, he was proud to be a martyr for an alien cause. Up with the enemy, whoever he might be, Egyptian, Soudanese, Boer, Irish or Indian! Blunt could rarely be brought to talk of his visit to India, where he went to preach sedition and was received as a spy.

I attended his appeal at the Four Courts in Dublin, where he insisted on appearing in his prison-clothes, a gaunt, pathetic figure that made me want to weep. We were allowed to see something of our jail-bird during the luncheon intervals and our eagerness to hear his experiences in prison may be imagined. I learned something of the pettiness and cruelty of Balfour's administration, of the needless vexations and indignities with which culture and refinement were harried; the nasty regulations interdicting pocket-handkerchiefs, hair-brushes and tooth-brushes and other toilet necessities; the long hours of solitude, without books, pens, paper or any sort of occupation for the mind; the spy-holes in

the cell-doors, the surprise visits in the night-time and the insulting formalities of personal search.

Blunt had entered prison with a determination to pursue new experiences and new sensations and enjoy the humorous side of anything that had one. He had told us that the stage properties of a prisoner were a mouse, a spider and a lovely jailer's daughter, and when we saw him he claimed to have found them all three. The spider spun her web contemptuously across the prison rules; the mouse shared his spare meal of bread and milk; and at dusk, in the room opposite, there would appear a shadow on the blind; and he would playfully wonder whether it were not the jailer's daughter, fair and kind and full of pity. The life, he said, was not unlike that on board ship—mechanical, monotonous, spick and span—and the governor used to stalk about with a gold lace cap, like the skipper of a Cunarder. The worst part of it all, he told me, was the terribly slow lapse of time—the long dreary days and the still longer nights. He gave a graphic description of the noisy clock in the courtyard, how he would wake up and hear it begin to strike, the eagerness with which he would count the strokes, in the hope that morning might be near, and his desperate vexation when the hour turned out to be only eleven.

As an illustration of the Chief Secretary's utter powerlessness to humiliate his victims, it may be mentioned that the rules were constantly relaxed in Blunt's favor, despite orders from Dublin. He was never required to clean his cell or to take more exercise than he wished. The oakum he picked was entirely at his discretion. (He gave me a piece of it, which I treasured in a locket.) He was never once "punished" though his warders were; the governor and other officials always called him "sir."

Counsel for the Crown was the notorious Peter

O'Brien, known in Ireland only by his nickname of "Pether the Packer"; a renegade from the Nationalist ranks, who had been rewarded with the post of Attorney-General and eventually became a judge. To a revolting personal appearance and the face of a satyr, he added the insolence of a bully and the manners of a boor. When Blunt, in his evidence, mentioned that his sight had suffered in prison O'Brien laughed derisively; but when the judge rebuked him he made a grovelling apology. The judge (Chief Baron Palles) was on the whole inclined to be fair, but he allowed himself to be bullied by the Attorney-General, and he admitted a mass of wholly irrelevant evidence, introduced by the Crown to prejudice the case. No effort had been spared by the Attorney-General, the inventor and perfector of jury-packing as a fine art, to secure a partisan panel, and accordingly our hopes of victory were very slender. As the trial proceeded, however, Blunt's case developed such striking elements of strength that it seemed impossible a verdict could be refused him. Before the case closed it had become clear to everyone that the meeting at Woodford had been perfectly legal and that Blunt was entitled to substantial damages for his arrest. In the end eleven jurymen took this view, while the twelfth, a Castle tradesman, remained obdurate and stultified the whole proceedings. Foolish as ever, Blunt expected gratitude from the Irish; but when he came out of jail he was invited to no more meetings, his hopes of an Irish seat were shattered on the plea that he was not an Irishman.

Blunt had recently stood for Camberwell as a Conservative Home Ruler. Now he was adopted for Deptford as a Liberal, very properly preferring principles to parties. His absence in Galway jail was regarded as a distinct asset, for voters would be spared his speeches

as well as the irritation of his arrogant manner. Each received a portrait of the martyr in his prison dress, but many regarded this as evidence of crime. Even the title and blandishments of his wife cut very little ice in the genteel villas of law-abiding Brockley. But for the energy and wisdom of Charlie Russell (Hon. Sir Charles Russell, Bart K. C. M. G.) Blunt would never have come within an ace of victory.

It was a long drawn campaign. William John Evelyn, the laird of Wotton, the owner of most of the ground rents of Deptford, was also a Conservative Home Ruler and a sentimentalist. When he heard of Blunt's sentence, he not only started campaigning in Ireland but announced that he would resign his seat as M. P. in favor of the martyr. But he waited to resign until the right moment for Blunt's chances and that moment seemed very slow to come.

Meanwhile, I had been advocating Tory Home Rule in the press rather noisily, and Evelyn wrote asking me to take the chair at one of his meetings. I called on him at the Travelers' Club, but he was so much shocked by my conspicuous youth that he hastily withdrew the invitation.

"Perhaps it would be better," he explained, "if we had someone a little older to take the chair." And it was vain for me to remind him that Pitt was still younger when he became Prime Minister of England. I am convinced that Evelyn was born old, just as Peter Pan and I will never cease to be young.

When he first asked me to Wotton I was warned that I should find a hornets' nest, as Mrs. Evelyn never welcomed any of her husband's guests. She was a Miss Chichester, a niece of Lord O'Neil, imbued with traditions of North East Ulster and William of Orange.

At lunch, when I arrived, she entrenched herself amid her children and their governess, scarcely opening her mouth. But she had a very sunny nature and we soon became great friends—indeed, I believe that with the exception of Arthur Baumann (then M. P. for Peckham, afterward Editor of the *Saturday Review*), I was the only person who ever remained on good terms with herself and her husband. For months I spent nearly every week-end at Wotton, receiving separate invitations from each of them unknown to the other.

Poor, dear, kindly, merry soul, she died in great agony. There was a visit to a dentist about, apparently, some trifle. He looked grave but could only advise her to show her mouth to a doctor. Meanwhile, he advised her not to kiss her children. Why on earth not? H'm, the doctor would say for certain. Alas, he did; his verdict was cancer, she was tortured with many futile operations and had an awful lingering death.

Evelyn could be the kindest and most cruel of men. He had few friends and many parasites. His pride made him deem himself more than royal, yet he would never trouble to try on his clothes and went about looking like a ragman. When the Prime Minister invited him and other London M. Ps. to a party Mr. Evelyn presented his compliments to Lord Salisbury and returned the invitation as he had not the honor of His Lordship's acquaintance.

He took me to see his mother, a very old lady living in the dower house, and she related how Disraeli had said to her at a party, "The Evelyns have always had good mothers." This tickled Mr. Evelyn immensely. "I suppose," he chuckled, "that you were expected to believe that Dizzy had devoted himself to a minute study of the annals of our family, not merely concerning him-



self with the men but actually searching out the moral qualities and maternal excellencies of their mothers. No wonder he was so popular with the fair sex!"

He usually appointed his parsons with rash haste, and had violent quarrels with them over trifles when the men had become fixtures. A leaflet appeared signed "Puss-in-Boots," criticizing some action of his. It was in vain that the Vicar of Abinger denied all knowledge. Evelyn was convinced of his guilt and proceeded to publish the *Abinger Monthly Record*, part of which consisted in really scurrilous attacks on the vicar, who was always referred to as "Puss-in-Boots." The remainder consisted of admirable literary and political paragraphs, which would have been eagerly welcomed by the best of London reviews. Indeed, I wrote many of them myself.

He quarreled even with me from time to time, but not for very long; and I can never forget the wonderful kindness he showed me, or the happy hours I spent in his society. We used sometimes to play chess all day in the conservatory, grudging the necessity of meals. He usually won, but found a delight in what he called the "brilliant unsoundness of my game."

## CHAPTER IV

### IRELAND

INFLAMED by the outrages to my friend and chief, Wilfrid Blunt, I plunged into the maelstrom of Irish politics, consummating my divorce from the Conservative Party by starting on the fourth of November, 1887, as a delegate of the Home Rule Union. Here are some of my first impressions:

Works of imagination have dealt with countries where everybody was a giant or a dwarf or a Yankee or an angel; and some humorist once conceived a House of Commons where everybody was Sir William Harcourt. A first visit to Ireland reveals a similarity almost as bewildering, every man, woman and child in the country being a full fledged politician. The remotest hamlet is always ready at a moment's notice to get up a meeting, provide impassioned orators, and present extravagant addresses to a sympathetic stranger. Every car-driver is a theorist on political philosophy, every infant shares the caste prejudices of his political party, every bog-trotter is an authority on the defects of the laws and the unfairness of their administration. . . .

Having Nationalist introductions of the most cordial character I was soon intimate with all the leaders. Putting up at the Imperial Hotel, which, in spite of its name, was the Nationalist headquarters, I hobnobbed with Michael Davitt, a one-armed man with a rugged face and crinkling eyes. He had all the superficial charm

of an Irishman, alloyed with the harsh democracy of his age. Whatever their faults, the Irish then retained a strong strain of poetry, imagination, and conservatism, which is not always the same thing. But Davitt, with all his transparent honesty, was all for physical force instead of constitutional agitation. He appeared to be a republican as well as a socialist. I remember on another occasion meeting him at a banquet of the Irish National League in London, and expressing my surprise that the toast of "The Queen" appeared upon the list.

"Well, I won't drink it," he said defiantly.

"You had better join me in drinking it 'over the water'," I suggested, but he shook his head and said that would be still worse.

I traveled as far as Athlone with T. D. Sullivan, M.P., then Lord Mayor of Dublin, who was quite of the old school and talked with picturesque vivacity, often with pathos. He spoke about the contempt shown to Irish members in the House of Commons, adding with gentle dignity, "For you the ambition to enter Parliament is laudable and honorable; for us its realization is fraught with insults and ostracism, and until lately we were looked upon by both parties alike as aliens and intruders." But he also had his gay moods, and was specially pleased by a letter he had just received from someone who appealed to him as the national poet, the writer saying he was anxious to lampoon an adversary but feared the libel laws and would be grateful for information as to the best means of procuring a *poetic license*.

I reached Castlerea at a quarter past midnight, and to my amazement, descried on entering the station a concourse of between two and three hundred people, who had come to receive me and followed my omnibus for nearly a mile to the hotel through a deluge of rain,

cheering and singing, "God Save Ireland." Next morning John Dillon arrived and I joined him at a meeting of tenants, where he decided on what he considered necessary abatements of rent. The proceedings took place in a yard regardless of the torrents of rain, everybody talking at once in the quaintest possible manner. Some agreed to various compromises, but most of the tenants asserted that they would not "pay one penny of rent so long as William O'Brien remains in jail."

After lunch we watched the people coming into the town for the afternoon's meeting. All day long they poured in from the whole countryside, some from distances of twelve and even fourteen miles; young farmers, riding unkempt cobs bareback; bevies of men, women and children on foot, many carrying their shoes and stockings slung across their shoulders and plodding happily along barefoot; contingents of the National League, with bands playing and banners flying. I never saw such pitiless rain; it was one of those steady, soaking floods, which seem as though they would go on for ever. But no one seemed to pay the faintest attention and there was scarcely an umbrella anywhere.

The meeting was held in the Market Place, and there must have been over 3,000 persons present, a surging sea of heads, everybody apparently in the highest spirits, and frantically enthusiastic. There had been the usual rumors of a government proclamation the night before, but the authorities thought better of it and, on the condition of a reporter being allowed upon the platform, agreed to confine the police to barracks. The platform arrangements were intensely disagreeable. It was the custom for every officer of a local branch of the League to claim his right to a place there. No seats were provided and

I found that standing there for over an hour, while Dillon spoke, with the rain streaming down my back and all the breath being squeezed out of my body, was not good preparation for effective speaking. However, everybody was very kind. And there was a wall at the other end of the square which threw back the sound, so that I had no difficulty in making myself heard. This was the stuff I gave them as a peroration: "The British democracy is with you. There is not a heart but beats in sympathy with your hopes and your trials and your fears; not a soul but breathes the prayer, 'God save Ireland!'" Here I took off my hat and raised it aloft amid a frantic tumult of applause—"God save Ireland! Lord have mercy upon her and deliver her from the hands of her oppressors."

I heard afterwards from Sir Charles Russell that Dillon had set on foot a story to the effect that directly my speech had ended an old woman pressed forward, and, holding out to me a rosy cheeked apple, shouted, "Here you are, my darlint!" Well, as they say in Ireland, "Why wouldn't she?"

In the evening Dillon carried me off to stay at the house of his aunt at Ballaghaderreen, some twelve miles off. There I met Mr. Cox, M.P., who was in hiding from the police. His sole method of disguise when he walked about the town was to remove his spectacles; and this proved perfectly successful, as the police had been told to hunt a man with spectacles and it did not seem to occur to them that he might take these off. Each time he went out he feared he might not return, but I believe he eluded capture until Parliament met some months later. My chief recollection of Ballaghaderreen is of the delightfully soporific effect of hot whisky toddy after a long drive in the rain. My chief recollection of the rest of



my tour in Ireland is a nightmare of remembrance of prosecutions under the Crimes Act, included among the victims an old woman of seventy-five and a little girl of eleven who were packed off to prison on a charge of attempting to seize sheep from a bailiff. I reported many of these cases to Shaw-Lefevre, afterward Lord Everley, who subjected them to official denials in the House of Commons.

In February, 1888, I accompanied Shaw-Lefevre on his famous expedition to Loughrea. Shaw-Lefevre was not a brave man, but he was the only high-placed Liberal who backed up Blunt. Indeed I am not sure he was not another of his "cousins." After Blunt's arrest at Woodford, Shaw-Lefevre determined to hold a similar meeting in the same district and see whether the Government dared arrest an ex-Cabinet Minister.

Evelyn shared a car with him across the Irish bogs. They had a violent collision with Dr. Tanner's car and a newspaper man was thrown senseless into a ditch. While Tanner was tending the wounded man some policemen came up and proffered assistance, whereupon he assailed them with an unheard of volley of abuse, bidding them be off and about their business. Evelyn's sense of fairness was shocked and he expressed his regret to the police that their offer of assistance should have been so discourteously received. But the men seemed to take it quite as a matter of course, and one of them replied with a smile: "Oh! sir, we don't mind. We know it's only Dr. Tanner's way!"

Tanner was a typical red-faced, loud-voiced, muddle-headed Irishman, a regular mock-turtle of geniality, quite the *faux bonhomme*. When the split came in the Irish party he was one of the first to throw over his allegiance to his leader, and ran about the country interrupting his

meetings with halloas and cries of "Tally-ho, Fox"—Mr. Fox being one of the names taken by Parnell when he traveled incognito.

Every precaution for secrecy was taken when Shaw-Lefevre started for Ireland. Our fellow-conspirators had been ordered to go there in small detachments and the press had been supplied only with the meager facts that the meeting was fixed for the tenth of February. However, when we reached Kingstown (Monday morning, the sixth) it appeared that we were expected, and Shaw-Lefevre's face was ghastly with horror and dismay when I told him that police spies on the platform had already marked him down. We then broke into further detachments, Shaw-Lefevre and Macdonald, a London Radical candidate, leaving that evening for Loughrea, and I following them next morning. From Woodlawn station I had to drive over twenty miles in a very rickety "mail-car" to Loughrea; indeed on the last five miles of our journey it seemed probable that we should have to go the rest of the way on foot, as the unfortunate pony was quite exhausted and as full of sores as Lazarus. I remonstrated with the driver about it, but he merely replied with a philosophic shrug, "Sure I don't mind it for her!"

We all chaffed Shaw-Lefevre about his parade of anxiety as to the expected proclamation of the meeting. The usual arrangements had been made in anticipation of government action. A dummy meeting was to be held in one place for the edification of the police and a real meeting some miles away. I remember a consultation with the principal tenants one afternoon on the subject. Shaw-Lefevre informed them in his most cathedral tones that he was very anxious to avoid all possible risk of bloodshed. They beamed with delight at his

thoughtfulness. Then he went on to impress upon them the reason why caution in the matter was of such urgent importance. "If anything were to happen, or if any lives were sacrificed," he informed them, with a solemnity worthy of so sacred a subject, "my political reputation would be most seriously compromised." No wonder the English are popular in Ireland.

Soon after our return I enjoyed the high privilege of making the acquaintance of Mr. Parnell. He was very different from my expectations. I expected to find the cold austerity which was popularly associated with his manners. Instead of this I found the warm, generous phrases which one associates with Disraeli. It had been a proof of great moral courage for me to stand on a platform with John Dillon; it was very encouraging to find the rising generation taking the generous side; and so forth. The only other man who ever treated me to language of this kind—almost as much to my surprise—was Lloyd George.

Tim Healy (first Governor General of "emancipated" Ireland) became one of Parnell's most vindictive opponents during the Irish schism. I heard at the time that this was revenge for a snub early in his career. Parnell used to hold aloof from his followers and was intolerant of any familiarity on their part. He had no particular opinion of Healy, whom he considered he had raised from the gutter. But Healy was as vain and clever as a monkey and constantly sought to assert himself. Once, in the early days of his career, he strutted up after an exhibition of oratory in the House of Commons and said, "What did you think of my speech, Parnell?"

"Mr. Parnell, please," was the reply, "and I did not think much of your speech."

Arthur Balfour must certainly possess some peculiar

qualities to maintain the legend of his charm, for his conceit and aloofness make up the most disagreeable manner I have ever encountered. I have so far successfully avoided speech with him, but Lord Dalziel once dragged me off to hear him speak at an anti-Irish demonstration in the park. Balfour stood on a tub or a trestle and put his thumbs in his arm-holes and began with his unctuous drawl, enunciating each word separately as though it were a divine message: "This—is—er—the—first—time—I—have—er—ever—addressed—a—meeting—in—Hyde-Park."

"Let's hope it will be the last," I shouted in disgust.

This caused laughter and slight disorder, but the interruption evidently did not reach him, for he proceeded imperturbably in his Olympian way.

"And—I—should—not—be—er—surprised—if—it—were—to be—the—last."

Dalziel was glad to move on, for he had grown anxious as though fearing he might be mixed up in a brawl. Moreover, he confided to me that he rather liked Balfour, and I have found that sentiment shared by all sorts of unlikely people. In some cases it amounted to personal devotion. I remember as a youth lunching with Lady Elizabeth Biddulph at Ledbury. It was at the time when Balfour was hanging men and women for the wearing of the green, and I happened to remark that he ought to be impeached and decapitated. Thereupon my hostess's brother, the Hon. Alick Yorke, looked up and said, "Who? Arthur Balfour?" Then he deliberately put his knife and fork together, rose and left the room, though we were only at the first course. I said I was sorry to deprive him of his lunch, but Lady Elizabeth laughed and said, "He is fearfully touchy about Arthur."

Once I nearly entangled the great philosopher, Herbert

Spencer into my orbit, as will be seen from the following letter :

64, Avenue Road, Regents Park, N.W.,  
April 7th, 1891.

Dear Sir,

I fear I cannot yield to your request, my reason being that, while in respect of the doctrine of individualism we are at one, I dissent from sundry of the opinions implied by your programme. So far from desiring any increase of popular power, which seems to be implied in your "Revision of our representative system," I think it is already too great; and so far from thinking that *plebiscites* and proportional representation will conduce to the "priceless boon of liberty," I believe they would be instrumental to further increase of that tyranny to which legislation daily adds another link.

Speaking generally, your programme implies the desire for great governmental changes, whereas my belief is that changes have been, for some time past, and are still, going on at far too great a rate.

I am, faithfully yours,

HERBERT SPENCER.

When Parnell's final crash came and he was fighting with his back to the wall against treacherous Liberal colleagues and disloyal creatures in Ireland, I did what I could to help him. I still think that if his health had held out he would have triumphed in the end. As it was the forces of puritanism and priestcraft were too strong for him, especially in alliance with the kind of public opinion which expresses itself at music-halls, in savage songs bellowed by the serio-comics of both sexes. There was one such song about his divorce, with the refrain, "He wants Home Rule for Ireland and he can't home-rule himself." But the full storm of ridicule was directed against his use of a fire-escape to climb out of Mrs. O'Shea's house.

I believe that, to this day, the fiction of the fire-escape



matter has never been denied. But Gerry O'Shea, the son of the petitioner and respondent in the case, told me that he invented the story himself. When the case was attracting enormous attention and excitement all over the country, Gerry was chased by reporters who plied him with ridiculous questions. "You must have been in your mother's house very often when Mr. Parnell visited her. . . . Is it not true that she used to post her children about to cry, 'Cave,' when your father was about? . . . When your father arrived suddenly, how did Mr. Parnell get away?"

"I'm sure I don't know," Gerry replied impatiently. "I suppose he got down the fire-escape."

As a matter of fact, there was no fire-escape on the premises, but thus the legend arose.

Gerry took his father's side and had always hated Parnell. For one thing, they were men of entirely different type—Parnell the dignified statesman with a streak of poetry and a strong vein of imagination; Gerry, the gay, light-hearted bruiser with biceps of iron, a round, smiling face and few interests beyond sport. He has boasted to me that he once threw a glass of sherry in Parnell's face.

But though he took his father's part, he was very far from being disloyal to his mother. During the trial he was at the Raleigh Club when somebody used a very foul expression about Mrs. O'Shea. As the matter was one of public interest, Gerry was surprisingly patient at the outset, saying to the man: "Look here, I shouldn't say that if I were you. You are talking about my mother."

"I don't care whose mother she is. I am talking about a ——." And here he deliberately repeated the foul expression.

"Put up your hands."

The man did so and received a cut under the jaw, which caused his death within a few hours. The verdict of the Coroner's Jury was "justifiable homicide."

After an absence of thirty years, I revisited Ireland in the summer of 1919. In many respects, she was utterly changed; in many others she was still more the same thing.

Have you ever madly loved a worthless woman? Have you ever made every allowance for all her aberrations, idiosyncrasies, extravagances, falsehoods, treacheries, just because she had red hair and green eyes and a temper of glorious violence? I had done all that and more also for the wild Irish Rosaleen. I had stumped her country with Parnell and Dillon and mad Blunt and poor timorous Shaw-Lefevre. I had believed her wild-goose romance was second only to Bonnie Scotland's wee, wee bird. My mind was filled with fandango tunes about Spanish ales and royal popes and the noble-hearted three, swinging on the gallows-tree. Rosaleen may have been a minx, I thought, but she was a dear little devil.

But when I revisited her shebeen where were *lesheiges d'artar*? Gone were the little people, withered the leprechauns, and a dour virago in curl papers envisaged me. Sinn Fein has killed smoking, drinking, flirting, rhapsodizing, every liberal and catholic emotion. If I sought to snatch a kiss from Rosaleen in a taxi, she called me a spalpeen and swore by Jove, or some such Saxon god, that she did not hold with such "dhirty" ways. At the Castle they told me they were at their wits' end because the race of informers had died out. Blessed be God for that! But the demise of pleasure had left Rosaleen nervous and disagreeable. She had ceased to crack her alleged jokes and exhibit her mock geniality. A spirit of aloofness has superseded blarney.

I emerged from the slum station at Westland Row and hailed an Alice-in-Wonderland vehicle, placed my foot into a kind of stirrup and clutched at a cushion like a monkey. Jarvey, with a face of a ruddy worm-eaten apple, twinkling beady eyes, crooked nose and the expression of a Court fool, shrugged his loose shoulders when I told him to go to the Chief Secretary's Lodge.

"Where is that, your honor?"

"I don't know," said I, sure that he was pulling my leg.

He appealed to the crowd and heads were wagged. I felt a suspect, the sport of a Hiberian Mafia; but it was all sober earnest. No one knew. A bare legged boy thought it might be "in the Pa-ark."

"Hu-uh," cried the ruddy driver, as he tickled the back of his red-haired nag with the tip of his whip. The nag was as much surprised as anyone, evidently disliked this incredible expedition, turned his head round to stare at us, blinked and set forth at a zig-zag canter. This show of zeal, however, did not last long, and we soon relapsed into an amble. The gradient was scarcely perceptible, but Jarvey informed me that it was "a stiff pull," as we crawled along the perfect road of the spotless, deserted Phœnix Park. There were brand-new sign-posts at every turning, but Jarvey insisted on stopping to ask every policeman the way.

"We are not often asked for the Chief Secretary's Lodge," he exclaimed, with an irresistible smile.

Suddenly a soldier and a policeman leaped upon us at the iron entrance gates. I exhibited the envelope of my letter of introduction, and was allowed to proceed up a drive flanked with sentry boxes. Rifles were moving about behind the bushes.

I pressed an electric bell beside a great conservatory, and, after many minutes, bolts and bars were elaborately

withdrawn. If I had been Rip Van Winkle I could not have been received with more surprise. The Chief Secretary was, of course, in London.

The red-haired nag disliked going downhill, so we ambled drowsily back through the Park to the Castle, which did not look its part as an emblem of alien rule. With its stone quadrangles and staircases and chapel, it might suggest a college to an indulgent eye; but the plethora of police, the silence and the dreariness were rather prison-like.

"This is the land of paradox," said the charming Under-Secretary, and he justified the statement by his opening remarks. "I myself am a Home Ruler," he began, "and I yield to no one in my desire that Ireland should manage her own affairs. But it is the duty of any Government to protect life and property."

He proceeded, like every Irishman I have ever met, to summarize Irish history. After dealing with this at great length, he asked, "Do you know"—and I did not know—"that when the war broke out all Ireland was enthusiastic to join up against the Huns?" He continued: "After all, it was only natural that a small nation should rally against the tyrants of the world. But what seemed miraculous was to find the sudden healing of all the old party rancors of generations. I saw bands of Orangemen at the head of processions, with all their banners and emblems and provocative cries, while the Nationalists followed gleefully singing: 'God Save Ireland,' or 'The Soldier's Song'; priests marched arm-in-arm with Ulster volunteers. Every Irishman loves a scrap, and here was an opportunity of getting a taste of the real thing. But they wanted an Irish Brigade, so that all the world might know what they were doing; and Kitchener insisted on drafting them into miscellaneous regiments, with the

result that all the enthusiasm evaporated almost as quickly as it arose. Still, Irish soldiers fought like heroes and were welcomed as heroes in their rebel villages. I have even seen soldiers returning from furlough with Sinn Fein emblems in their buttonholes. I tell you, you never know where you are in this land of paradox. I am convinced the great majority of people is now for Sinn Fein. But the Dublin rebellion of 1916 was nowhere more unpopular than in Dublin. A priest told me he went to see some of the prisoners and they were clamoring to be let out; but he told them, 'The only result of letting you out would be that you would be lynched here in your own parish!'

Taking an opportunity of renewing my old acquaintance with John Dillon (I was hospitably invited to lunch), I was somewhat depressed to find an aged and dispirited leader. White and bent, he seemed now to spend the whole of his day in a library, with books on every wall right up to the ceiling, books on every chair and table, books in piles all over the floor. He told me sadly that all the labors of very long years had been spoiled by the precipitancy of a handful of young men who looked upon him as a back number and had ruined the cause of Ireland by their outrageous demands.

"Yes," he said, "the Sinn Feiners are doubtless all you have heard of them in the way of sobriety and integrity, but they lack experience. We of the old Nationalist Party may be doddering old fools, but we have never made ourselves a laughing stock as they have. Look at their Parliament at the Mansion House, with unsophisticated young men posing as Prime Ministers and Foreign Secretaries and Chancellors of the Exchequer and delivering cryptic speeches, in what they conceive to be Irish, to audiences who scarcely understand a word. You tell



me they say the war is not over so far as they are concerned; the Irish front will always remain open and so forth. That means they are at liberty to shoot policemen in the back, but what would they say if England took them at their word and waged war against them? They would be wiped out in a week."

My next visit was to William Cosgrove, who has since become, through the assassination of his colleagues, President of the Free State. I had an introduction to him from an English friend who had sympathized so far with Ireland as to take part in the Dublin rebellion. Even so, Cosgrove was by no means easy of access. This was, no doubt, largely due to the enormous calls upon his time; but when at last I did see him he gave me to understand that every outsider was now regarded with extreme suspicion.

His home was attached to a very small grocer's shop, which was run by his father, in the slums of Dublin, and if I had not known who he was it would have been difficult to distinguish him from the ordinary grocer's assistant. His appearance was modest, his manners were quiet and unassuming, and one might have thought that he took no interest in anything beyond sugar and spice or whatever nice things grocers sell. However, when he had taken me upstairs and talked to me for an hour or two, I realized that he was a typical leader of the new Ireland.

He provided me with whisky and cigarettes as a matter of course, but himself merely drank a little lemonade out of politeness. When I commented upon this, he told me it was a sort of vow among all members of the party to restrict themselves to bare necessities, and refrain from anything approaching pleasure until their cause was won. He also told me that reticence was now the order of the

day and that if I traveled about the country I should not find the people disposed to talk.

He himself was to a certain extent an exception in my case, but only after he had made sure of my sympathies with the cause of his country, and had made allowance for my admission that I was opposed to a democratic solution. This, I think, especially appealed to him, for when I made vain attempts to depart he went on pressing me to stay, as he said he had never met anyone like me at all. When at last I was allowed to go he took me to the window and pointed to a building opposite saying: "That is the place where Sir ——" (mentioning the friend who had given me my introduction) "fought by my side during many long hours in 1916. I must say this for him that he fought like a Trojan."

I asked whether they had killed many people, and he replied with a shrug that they had done what they could.

Cosgrove talked with an engaging simplicity about his own experiences. "They condemned me to death," he said, "and then commuted the sentence to penal servitude for life, which did not prove to mean very long. I think what I found most disagreeable was the lavatory arrangements, which were sickening, the constant searches, which were intended to be humiliating, and the insufficiency of food. Of course, I don't eat meat on Fridays, so that meant bread and water on that day. I suppose they tried to 'talk to me like a dog,' though nice people don't talk to dogs as they talked to me. Here is an incident: I was brought up before the Governor because a warder said I had scribbled on the wall. Now that is a thing we don't do. I know it is a common habit with tourists, but in Ireland we consider it common. So I didn't answer. I might have smiled a little contemptuously at the idea.

That was insubordination, and meant not only solitary confinement but a torrent of abuse."

Of course, Cosgrove was as well acquainted with Irish history as I am with any other fairy-tale. But when I asked about the policy of the Irish republic he floundered quickly to sea. The question of Free Trade, for instance, he admitted he had not even considered. Noting my surprise he hastened to explain that he had left an elementary school at the age of fourteen and had had to educate himself ever since.

Cosgrove's warning that I should be received with suspicion in the interior of Ireland was confirmed by the Inspector-General at the Castle. "Go to the proclaimed districts," he said, "by all means, but you'll only see a lot of policemen and soldiers."

Still, it was not until I went out into the wilds that I realized the extent of the suspicion. One imagines all Irishmen to be garrulous, hilarious children, with their hearts always on their sleeves. There could be no greater delusion. I found the country just one big secret society. Even in a race-train nobody talked.

Limerick Junction consisted of a race course, a few stone cottages and a hotel advertised as "adjoining the station"—though it proved to be about half a mile away. Wizenen women in shawls, flocks of children, packs of dogs stared disagreeably at the arriving stranger. A knot of black uniforms gathered at the wicket of the barracks and whispered and pointed in ostentatious espionage. More black uniforms and red faces scowled from the windows.

The hotel yard contained stables, a shop, and an unfriendly dog. A boy led me through a garden and rang a bell. Nothing happened for a while. Then the door was opened by a hard looking female, who frowned and

barred the way. I said I had telegraphed for a room, and she merely sighed. I thought I was to be turned away, though the boy had been sent to meet me.

I tried the torrent of talk which one associates with the Irish of fiction, but I found the Irish of real life understood my accent as little as I did theirs. Every sentence had to be repeated three times very distinctly and that discouraged heartiness. I gave vivid descriptions of my parched and famished state, dwelt upon the heat and burden of the journey from Dublin, enlarged upon the joys of Ireland flowing with honey and potheen.

At first the only answer was a sour, "I beg your pardon"; which is the national way of saying, "I do not understand." Then this lady watchdog caught one word and growled, "Honey! You'll not be finding any honey here."

"Well, I suppose I may have some dinner."

"I beg your pardon."

"Dinner! D-I-N-N-E-R!"

"Dinner, is it? At eight o'clock?"

"Have you nothing to eat at all?"

"Indeed I have. There's cold meat, and you'll be having a cup of tea, I suppose?"

"Is that all?"

"What more would you be wanting? There might be a chop."

"All right, a chop and some potatoes."

"I beg your pardon. Oh! potatoes! I have none at all, but I'll go and see."

Meanwhile, three fat young men had slouched out of a living room, leaving scraps on a dirty cloth and empty glasses and an atmosphere of bad tobacco. I was not allowed into the real coffeeroom which was half full of people, but had to eat among the scraps. Attempts at

conversation with the waitress were passively resisted with monosyllables or else the everlasting refrain, "I beg your párdon." Her only interest was to know how early I was to leave in the morning, and an attempt at a stroll was sternly repressed on the plea of early closing.

However, when I reached Limerick I slowly began to gain a very limited confidence. Strangers actually volunteered remarks about the weather, and I was sometimes allowed to overhear snatches of political conversation, from which no Irishman can ever refrain very long. Races, too, afford a friendly bond, and I became almost intimate with a horse dealer who was waiting for a fair. We began on the hotel doorstep while watching the rain.

Then a mysterious young man, who might have been George Borrow, stood before us hugging his coat. "Do you want a live hare?" he whispered. "It's worth a sovereign, but I'd let you have it for ten bob."

He dragged out his unfortunate captive by the ears, and asked where I had ever seen such a beautiful creature. It was in vain for me to protest that I could not eat it and had no desire to course it through the hotel.

"Do buy her, sir. You'll never have such a chance again. Well if you will not," he cried impatiently, at last, "may I ask you two gentlemen to have a drink at my expense?"

The horse dealer laughed and said, "No, I am a Carsonite." But I accepted in pursuit of local color.

The custom in the country is to drink porter in grocers' shops. The barmaid usually sits at the window, inviting wayfarers with her smiles.

I asked my companion about the reference to Carson.

"Sure," he replied, "we all think Carson must have had a skinful of liquor on board when he made that speech on the twelfth. There's no vice about Carson. He's an



Irishman to the backbone, and he'll be with us right enough when we have Home Rule."

I found the priests more communicative than other people. I made friends with a couple in the bar of Limerick racecourse, where no one seemed surprised to see them. They sipped lemonade while they fingered the crosses on their gold watch-chains. From the way I dropped the "h" in whisky they detected my nationality at once and remarked that it was a good thing for an Englishman to come and brush away misunderstandings. They gave me the wrong tip on the next race, and apologized afterwards. Whereupon I said they must make it up with tips about Sinn Fein.

I think they would have liked to say that there was no such thing in existence, but they contented themselves with saying that it was exaggerated. Ireland was the natural friend of Great Britain and would be the happiest little country in the world if only she had fair play. Details of fair play, however, were hard to extract. Their chief grievance seemed to be that Ulster was allowed to organize volunteers and secrete Hamburg rifles, whereas the finding of grandfather's old shotgun, forgotten in a Tipperary farm, might mean hard labor and prison clothes. Most of their conversation, however, was an endeavor to tell me what they thought would please me. German arms and German money? Not a penny, not a cartridge outside Ulster. Roger Casement? Oh! he was a crank, and no one trusted him with a single secret.

"In any case, you can't deny the Dublin rebellion, stabbing us in the back during our blackest hour."

"That was part and parcel of Ireland's chronic war against her traditional enemy. We sided far more with the Spanish Armada and Napoleon Buonaparte than we ever did with the Germans. The Irish people disap-

proved of the Dublin rebellion because it was futile."

The only really communicative people I found in Ireland were those rare birds the Irish loyalists. They made up in dogmatism for what they lacked in intelligence. Here are some snatches of conversation gleaned in the lounge of the Royal Marine Hotel at Kingstown: "Looks like rain again, what? Disgraceful business that scrimmage in the streets last night, but one must expect that sort of thing in Ireland—what? Did I ever tell you my solution for Ireland? I'd give them five years. No, not penal servitude, ha, ha! Just five years of absolute independence. Then we'd see what they were made of, and if they managed for five years try 'em with another five, what? Why, in five months they'd all be at each others' throats with at least five hundred candidates for the presidency!"

Everybody insisted on relating an incident which had happened recently on the railway.

"What are we stopping for?" cried the guard.

"The signals is against us," the engine driver replied.

"Bedad, but you are growing mighty particular in your old age."

## CHAPTER V

### LABOUCHERE

WHEN Henry Labouchere, M. P., proprietor-editor of "*Truth*," was sitting to Sickert, Lulu Harcourt (afterwards the first Viscount Harcourt) and I collaborated on the text to accompany the cartoon. Here is one of Harcourt's prose-pictures, which seems to me to sum up Labby's character very well: ". . . an odd jumble of Rupert and Diogenes, his love of rash, semi-chivalrous onslaughts is generally tempered by the wisdom of the serpent. His is that priceless gift of chronic cynicism, which so many dullards affect, but which is in reality the strict prerogative of genius."

Sir Henry Lucy had an odd habit of inviting people to dinner without knowing them. When he did that to me I was so much surprised that I accepted, and I was very glad I did. There was Sir George Lewis, the famous solicitor. Lewis was so cautious a man that when Sickert did his cartoon he preferred not to sign it lest he should commit himself to something. Another person at the dinner was Sir Francis Burnand, the editor of *Punch*, who cracked jokes most of the time, exhibiting a preference for puns. For instance, when I told a story about the Archbishop of Canterbury's butler, he interjected, "Decanterbury, you mean." Years after, when Sir Arthur Pearson was denouncing puns, I mentioned this one in extenuation and he grew seriously angry, saying

that puns amounted to an indecent offense and ought to be severely punished by parents like other childish misdemeanors.

But the chief joy of the party was meeting Labouchere. Every word he uttered was witty in a dry, cynical way. The story I remember best concerned a meeting he attended at Northampton, with Bradlaugh, his colleague in the representation of that borough.

Bradlaugh had a habit of writing out the headings of a speech in a large round hand upon a sheet of foolscap. Labouchere, who spoke first, caught sight of this document lying on the table, and his irrepressible spirit of mischief at once prompted him to use it for a prank. Accordingly, he discarded his own speech, with its fund of jokes and scriptural allusions, solemnly setting to work to deliver Bradlaugh's speech to the meeting. He did not take the points in order but darted about among them like a bee culling honey from the flowers. As he saw his colleague take out a pencil and mournfully scratch out one heading after another a sardonic smile stole over his countenance and his audience began to wonder what it was amused him.

As the unfortunate Bradlaugh's materials grew scantier and scantier he became restive and amazed, but his tormentor went on remorselessly and reveled in the fun. At last all the points were exhausted save one, and Labouchere wound up his speech with a majestic peroration about the spark of liberty and so forth entirely foreign to his habitual style. Bradlaugh felt disgusted at the depredations that had been made, but tried to find consolation in the one ewe lamb that had been left him, determining to make it the subject of a shortened speech. Before he could do so, however, Labouchere had risen again and gravely remarked that there was one other

point he had intended to mention which it was important not to pass over. Then he deliberately proceeded to make use of the sole remaining heading on the ill-fated sheet of notes.

Bradlaugh took it all in very good part, and it was certainly a remarkable proof of his ready resource in an emergency that, in spite of this disconcerting trick, he was able to extemporize as bright and brilliant an address as many upon which he had lavished midnight oil. Labouchere himself ran no risks of being made the victim of such a joke, for, in the first place, he never used any notes, but, if he had, his handwriting was so infamous that no one else would ever have been able to read it.

I once persuaded Labouchere to tell me some of his gambling experiences in Mexico. A Mexican, he said, would rob a church or cut a throat without the least compunction in order to pay a debt of honor, but the debt once paid, would stick at nothing to get back his money.

One day Labby went with some friends to a place near the City of Mexico where there was a roulette bank. He became so much engrossed in the game that he allowed his friends to go back without him and remained on playing into the small hours. At last the game came to an abrupt end, owing to the fact that Labby had won all the money. Then the whole party went down to the yard where the horses were tied up by the lassoes which every Mexican carries. The merry gamblers announced that they could not allow so good a sportsman to ride back alone, particularly (one of them added slyly) with so much of their money in his pocket. Labby, however, did not like the look of all their weapons and felt that he was in a tight corner. He thanked them for their



courtesy and called for a cup of chocolate as though in no hurry to start, but directly their backs were turned he galloped off at full pelt for Mexico. The others were not slow to pursue, but he had an excellent horse and their bullets went wild over his head. Then they made frantic efforts to lasso him or his horse's hind foot, which is the favorite method of chase in those regions. He told me it felt anything but comfortable when the ropes whizzed past his face as they did again and again. There were many narrow squeaks, but Labby's horse was too much for the pursuers and a kind Providence spared him to delight the world for many years to come.

Everybody knows the story about Labby when he was an attaché at Washington, and an important member of Congress bounced into the Embassy exclaiming, "I want to see the boss." Whereupon the following dialogue ensued:

LABOUCHERE: "He's out. See me."

CONGRESSMAN: "You're no more good to me than a sick headache. I'll wait."

LABOUCHERE: "Pray take a seat."

CONGRESSMAN (after two hours) : "Stranger, I've been fooling round here long enough. Has the boss come in yet?"

LABOUCHERE: "You'll see him drive up when he returns."

CONGRESSMAN: "How long do you reckon he will be?"

LABOUCHERE: "I suppose about six weeks. He went to Canada yesterday."

But the following story has not seen the light and comes straight from his lips. While Labby was attaché at Washington, probably the most amusing period of his farcical life, he was sent under an assumed name on a secret mission to Boston. There he lost all his money,

save half a dollar, in a gambling-hell, and found on returning to his hotel that the house had been sold up and he had to seek accommodation outside. He wrote to Washington for money, but had to wait two days, sleeping in the park and living on the lean of the land. The evening of the second day he was so hungry that he determined to tax his self-assurance to earn him a dinner. Accordingly, he made his way into an Irish restaurant and ordered the best which the house could offer. During the meal he conversed affably with the waiter in a thick brogue and threw out vague hints about his "patriotic" achievements in the cause of Ireland. When the meal was over he called for his bill most cheerfully, intending when it came to express horror at having come out without his purse. To his amazement, however, the landlord came up and said, "Of course, we have all recognized you, Mr. So-and-so"—mentioning a famous dynamiter—"and we couldn't think of taking a cent from so splendid a patriot." The story of this dinner was told sometime afterwards to the famous dynamiter, who said that he dined at all the Irish restaurants in Boston and had always been overcharged for everything.

Years afterwards, when Lord Rosebery was Prime Minister, Labouchere had been prevented by Queen Victoria from receiving a post in the Cabinet, so he wrote to Rosebery and said that feeling the advance of years he desired to retire from the House of Commons, that if he remained there he would probably revert to his old practice of attacking the existing government. It was therefore the interest of ministers that he should be removed to another sphere, and he suggested that he should be given the Embassy at Washington. He knew that the ownership of *Truth* was a disqualification, but

he was a wealthy man, independent of that paper, which brought him in an income of £12,000 a year, and he was quite ready to give it up. Rosebery informed him that the request could not be granted, and many people have associated Labouchere's persistent attacks on the "Peer-Premier" with this refusal. Lord Eversley (our old friend Shaw-Lefevre) has since blurted out what happened at the Cabinet council. Rosebery had said that he was personally in favor of the appointment but thought that it should be left to the Cabinet as a whole, and the Cabinet decided against it.

When Labouchere retired from public life and spent most of his time at Florence, he still continued to write a great deal for *Truth*. Horace Voules, his editor, told me when I lunched with him at Uplands, his fine house near Brighton, that there had never been such a proprietor in the history of journalism:

"Every week, nay, every day, he sends me huge fat envelopes full of manuscripts dealing with every conceivable topic, comments, criticisms, reminiscences, some of them of extraordinary interest, most of them revealing the incipient dullness of age. But he is quite indifferent whether I publish them or not. Here is what he says in one of his last letters: 'If you don't like my stuff you know what to do with it. Just put a piece of string through the corners of the sheets and hang them up in the smallest room of your house.' "

In spite of his cynicism Labouchere had a very kind heart, and I have always found him willing to give me help or advice. Here is a letter which he wrote me during the evening of his days, when I was in somewhat bad odor with official Liberalism and had asked the veteran to come to my aid:

Villa Crutina, Florence, Italy,  
(undated), 1904.

Dear Mr. X.,

I should have been delighted to have tried to be of any use to you, but I do not suppose that I shall be back in England before the meeting of Parliament. It seems to me that the Govt. has only to commit a few more mistakes for us to sweep the country, except that in politics the unexpected usually happens.

Yours very truly,

H. LABOUCHERE.

## CHAPTER VI

### WHISTLER

My favorite fishing story was told me by James McNeil Whistler. Once upon a time he was staying at a big hotel on the Italian lakes, and on the balcony below his was a beautiful bowl of goldfish belonging to a lady with whom he usually conversed at meals, though her chief topic was the heat and she was too stupid to afford him many opportunities of teasing her. That was a horrid vexation to the man who prided himself on being the champion tease. But he was usually capable of extracting mischief from the most unpromising material, almost sunbeams from cucumbers.

One broiling afternoon he was thoroughly at a loose end, leaning out of his balcony and cursing the monotony of the blue waters of the lake. Then his roving eyes lit upon the bowl below with the glittering little pets of the worthy dame. Happy thought! He ran down the passage like a schoolboy and borrowed a rod from a friend. In a few minutes he rubbed his hands over his wonderful catch, the little fish looked very sweet as they wriggled on his writing table. Ha! There was an American chafing dish which caught his eye. In a trice he had cooked his little victims and dropped them back one by one into their bowl.

When dinner came he waited with grim impatience for the sequel. It was not long in coming. The good lady arrived bubbling over with excitement and wiping the beads of perspiration from her brow.



"What a day!" she panted and puffed. "What tropical heat! We might as well be on the West coast of Africa. Would you believe it, Mr. Whistler, the sun was so fierce this afternoon that when I went out on to the balcony after my siesta I found that all my poor little goldfish had actually been fried?"

Whistler's appearance was as extraordinary as his character. His cadaverous face and mad eyes reminded me of Don Quixote. In his raven-dyed hair nestled one snow-white lock tied up with baby-ribbon, but it was usually concealed under a child's straw hat. Very quixotic the little man looked one evening when he strutted into the lounge at Drury Lane, twiddling a long thin cane like the wand of a court flunkey. His eyes flashed as he caught sight of a sturdy, unimaginative looking man quaffing whisky at the bar.

"Hawk, hawk, hawk!" he squeaked in the falsetto which came to him when he was thoroughly roused. The white wand flickered through the air and tapped the face of the unsuspecting bar-loafer. This was a man named Augustus Moore, a disreputable brother of George Moore, who has acquired a certain reputation as a writer of heavy fiction. At that time Augustus edited a scurrilous paper called *The Hawk*, which enjoyed a certain popularity in Bohemia; and he had just published a paragraph reflecting on Mrs. Whistler's first husband, a sculptor named Godwin.

Now one can understand chivalrous indignation about a libel on the dead and the injured feelings of a widow, but one does not often find an ordinary husband burning for bloodshed on behalf of his predecessor. Whatever Whistler was no one could call him ordinary. Besides, he never neglected an opportunity for advertisement. And here was a first night at the first theater in London, with

all the rank and fashion, all the aristocracy of letters as his audience.

Moore told his readers that his Irish blood was roused and that he "knocked the little monkey down." As a matter of fact he was restrained by the crowd. Whistler's idea had been to provoke a duel, and when nothing more came of the incident he wrote to the papers, deploring the degeneracy of the times, when "a pulled nose may still be blown." There followed a long duel on paper instead of on Boulogne sands.

My acquaintance with Whistler arose through a press criticism of Oscar Wilde from my pen, and soon ripened into a long intimacy. Almost every day he used to come round to my rooms or send me spicy little notes with his butterfly signature. Unfortunately most of them were lost in a depository, but many years after I was offered £4. 3. 4d. each for the score or so of scribbles that remained. I mention this because of the contrast with Whistler's financial position when his celebrity was still confined to a small clique. I remember Sickert once whispering to me how grateful the Master would be if I could get him any commissions for portraits at twenty or even ten pounds each. Ten pounds for immortality in a masterpiece which would now be greedily bought for thousands by any public gallery or American millionaire!

That, however, was by no means the nadir of Whistler's fortunes. When I was at Venice I used to hear many tales of his sordid penury, his living in one room on a side canal with a peasant model and never knowing where his next plate of macaroni would come from. On one occasion the unhappy pair quite made up their minds to commit suicide together by jumping into one of the canals of Venice. They set the house in order and started out on their dismal errand, but happening

to meet a friend on the way they forgot all about it. With my knowledge of Whistler's temperament, I do not believe he would ever have contemplated suicide anywhere else, but Venice in autumn and winter is depressing enough to damp the most buoyant soul.

I used to meet Charles Brookfield frequently at Whistler's house in Cheyne Walk. I think Whistler was especially attracted to him because he had once knocked down Augustus Moore and had treated him still more cruelly in a clever caricature. If he had not been an actor he would have done very well as a caricaturist. He did not appear at his best in the company of Whistler, who was accustomed to do most of the talking, but it was worth while to go to a bar in the Haymarket before lunch and listen to the delightful stories which he reeled out to an admiring crowd of loafers. One of the best was about his finding Sir Charles Wyndham seated in Garrick's chair at the Garrick Club at the time he was acting in "David Garrick."

"My dear Wyndham," Brookfield cried, with more than his usual heartiness, "I must say you look more and more like Garrick every day."

This delighted Wyndham, who purred vehemently until Brookfield added, "And less and less like him every night."

Another of his favorite stories was that of his remark to old George Grossmith, "My dear George, I never realized what a gentleman you were until I met your brother Weedon."

When Whistler had any money in his pocket he was always ready to scatter it profusely. He never kept accounts or took the trouble to calculate what rate of expenditure accorded with his income. He said to me one day: "You never know where you are with those

beggars, the serious financiers of the earth. I believe they are all in league with one another. Sometimes you are quite free from them for a long time. Then one comes in with his little bill and you write him a check. Then another comes and you tell him it isn't quite convenient to pay him just now, but if he'll wait a month or two you'll see what you can do for him. Not a bit of it. He is as suspicious as an old crow, and says if you don't pay him at once he'll serve you with one of those yellow papers, don't you know? Then you grumble and write him a check, too. This is all very fine and you go on writing checks whenever the cormorants come. But there must be a limit to all things and at last the day arrives when you can't write them any more checks. Then it's the very mischief. Ha! ha! ha! Don't you know?"

He used to go about Venice and do marvelous etchings for which he could find no market or else only starvation prices. When he was absolutely obliged he would sell them for what he could get, but he never lost the fullest confidence in himself, and whenever he could, he preferred to keep them in the expectation—nay, the certainty—of being able to sell them one day at a high figure.

One of the pictures which he sold for a few francs to a Venetian pawnbroker found its way into a Bond Street shop, where it was priced at several hundred pounds. One of his disciples saw it there and raved so loudly about its perfections that Whistler hurried off at once to see it. He found someone on the point of buying it and a number of young impressionist painters vying with each other in its glorification.

"Look at the amazing value of the background," Sickert was saying to Roussel.

"Yes, and what marvelous tones, what a melodious

composition and what exquisite delicacies of outline!" Roussel was saying to Sickert.

"Verily it is the Master's greatest masterpiece," they were chorusing as Whistler entered.

He deliberately wiped his single eyeglass with his silk pocket handkerchief and adjusted it to his right eye. He looked up and down the picture contemptuously and grunted: "Humph! Can't say I think much of it. Why, it isn't half finished."

Everybody was hugely tickled except the two disciples whose admiration had been so hastily repudiated, and the picture dealer who thereby lost his opportunity of making a good deal. A discussion on the subject in the press prompted Whistler to write and denounce the picture as "long ago barely begun and thrown aside for destruction." Whereupon someone else quoted from one of Whistler's speeches his dictum that "the work of a Master is complete from the very beginning."

When he went roaming about Venice in search of subjects for his etchings he used to make considerable mystery about the expeditions and would rarely allow anybody to accompany him, or if he did it was always under the strictest pledge of secrecy. What was the use, he would ask, of his ferreting out some wonderful old bridge or archway and thinking of making it immortal if some second-rate "painter-man" were to come after him and make it commonplace with his caricatures? On the other hand, if some friend of his discovered an ideal spot and asked him what he thought of it, he would not scruple for an instant to say: "Come now, this is all nonsense your trying to do this. It is much too good a subject to be wasted on you. You had better let me see what I can do with it." And he would be so charming about all this and take his own superiority so com-



pletely for granted that no one ever dreamed of refusing him.

There were certain phrases which he was always using, such as, "don't you know?" and "what?" at the end of a sentence. His favorite adjective was "amazing," and he applied it to all manner of people and things in a really amazing manner. He was fully alive to the importance of a drawl in giving points to an anecdote. He used constantly to say to a man called Haxton, who had a dreadful stutter, "You know, what makes you so amazing is that stammer of yours. If it weren't too late, I should try to grow one like it myself. If I could stutter as you do I could get off some astounding things."

It was impossible to be in Whistler's society long without hearing talk of "getting off" amazing or astounding things, by which he meant epigrams. He would spare no pains to get off a good one and would lead up to it with the most painstaking ingenuity, so that it might at last be jerked out in a natural way.

Whistler was very fond of relating stories about his bailiffs. The bailiff he was proudest of threatened to be quite disagreeable when he arrived. He tried to wear his hat in the drawing-room and smoked and spat all over the house. Whistler soon settled that. He went out into the hall and fetched a stick and daintily knocked the fellow's hat off. He was so much surprised that he forgot to be angry and within a day or two he had been trained to wait at table. Then one morning while Whistler was shaving a message was brought up that the man (he was always known in the house as "the man," as if he were the only one of his species) wanted to speak to him. "Very well, send him up," said Whistler. He went on shaving, and when the man came in asked abruptly, "Now then, what do you want?"

"I want my money, sir."

"What money?"

"My possession money, sir."

"What, haven't they given it to you?"

"No, sir. It's you that has to give it to me."

"Oh! the deuce I have!" And Whistler laughingly gave him to understand that if he wanted money he must apply to the people who sent him.

"Well, I think it's very 'ard, sir," the man began to snivel, "I have my own family to keep and my own rent to pay."

"I'll tell you what I advise you to do," Whistler returned, as he gently pushed him out of the room, "have a man in yourself."

Soon after this the man came and said that if he was not paid he would have to put bills up outside the house announcing a sale. And, sure enough, a few days later great posters were stuck up all over the front of the house announcing so many tables and so many chairs and so much old Nankin china for sale on a given day. Whistler enjoyed the joke hugely and hastened to send out invitations to all his friends to a luncheon party, adding as a P. S., "You will know the house by the bills of sale stuck up outside." And the bailiff proved an admirable butler and the party one of the merriest ever known.

There was another bailiff story which Whistler delighted in relating. Someone told him that a mixture of snuff and beer had the property of sending people to sleep. So he purchased a large parcel of snuff and put the greater part of it into a gigantic tankard full of beer, which he sent out to his bailiff in the garden. It was a very hot summer afternoon and the man eagerly welcomed his refreshment. Whistler was indoors painting and forgot all about him. In the evening he said to his

servant, "Where's the man?" The servant replied, "I don't know, sir, I suppose he must have gone away."

Next morning, Whistler rose very late and went out into the garden, where he was astounded to see the bailiff in precisely the same position as the day before. The empty tankard was on the table beside him and his pipe had fallen from his hand on to the grass. "Hallo, my sleeping beauty," said Whistler, "have you been there all this while?" But the man made no answer, and all Whistler's efforts to rouse him were unavailing. Late in the afternoon, however, he awoke in the most natural way in the world, exclaiming that it was dreadfully hot weather and that he must have been asleep over an hour.

Meanwhile Whistler had got some money together and was able to pay him off. Some hours later, when Whistler was sipping his coffee after dinner in a very happy frame of mind, a ring was heard at the door and the man rushed in unceremoniously. He was evidently in a state of great excitement and began by asking Whistler what day of the month it was.

"If that's all you want to know," was the reply, "you may as well go away again."

"Well, sir," said the man, "I can't make it out at all. Here you've paid me three days' possession money and I could have sworn it was the sixteenth, but somehow or other everybody tells me it's the seventeenth, and I see the evening papers are dated the seventeenth, and my wife's been blowing me up for being out all last night without being able to explain it. I told her I'd been here, but she said if I had that would be four days' possession money. So I thought the only thing was to come and ask you, sir."

Whistler was not to be led into a confession, but he

gave the man some more money and said he hoped not to have the pleasure of seeing him again.

One of the most interesting things Whistler ever told me was about his visit to Disraeli at Hughenden. I do not suppose Disraeli's ready appreciation of character has ever been more charmingly illustrated. Somebody, or some public body, had told Whistler that if he could induce the statesman to sit to him he should have £1,500. Whistler just telegraphed that he was coming and started post-haste for Hughenden. On reaching the house he was sent on to seek his host in the garden, where he found him feeding his peacocks. The greeting was more than cordial, effusive even, if Whistler is to be believed. Disraeli lavished his choicest gems of wit and epigram, put himself to infinite pains to draw out his visitor and won his devoted admiration. "He was immense," as Whistler put it in his vernacular, rolling his eyes and rubbing his hands at the recollection. Disraeli spoke of everything except the object of the visit; but by the time his visitor had found an opportunity of propounding it the flattering attentions had done their work, the most abrupt refusal would have failed to irritate. However, Disraeli was as far as possible from being abrupt.

"Mr. Whistler," he said, in his most engaging accents, "I beg you to believe that if, on pain of decapitation, I were obliged to have my portrait painted, there is no artist by whom I would rather be immortalized than by yourself. But alas! I have an invincible repugnance to sitting; and for the present at any rate I must ask you to excuse me. . . . It is true," he added, "that I have given sittings to Mr. Millais. But that was at the express command of the Queen. And you know we live on an island; we never know the consequences of dis-

obedience to the Sovereign. There is always a possibility that one may be carried off to the Tower, tied up in a sack and cast into the Thames!"

With this they made their way back to the house, laughing right merrily. And, as they took leave of one another on the doorstep, Disraeli held Whistler's hand a long time in his, staring him full in the eyes with his far-off oriental gaze.

"You are a very great man, Mr. Whistler," he said at length, in his deep tones and slow, impressive utterance. In the course of three-quarters of an hour he had thoroughly learned to know his Whistler and had divined the one remark which it was appropriate to make to him after such an interview.

Whistler would mount the high horse at the most unexpected moments. One morning I omitted to remove my hat when I came into his studio—I scarcely know why, except that a studio, like a barn, has something of an outdoor atmosphere about it. He seemed to take no notice and started an animated conversation about one or other of his "gentle enemies." But I noticed that he was edging his way to a trestle-table, where he casually picked up his odd little straw hat. He did nothing to emphasize the action when he placed it on his head, but there was a challenge in his eye and I knew that he meant to convey a reproof. So I took the cue and went on talking as I wandered off to the table and deposited my hat and stick. No sooner had I done this than he whipped off his hat and threw it on a chair with a sigh of relief.

I give one of his letters, as it is rather characteristic of the man. It has no date, but must have been in the early stage of our acquaintance:



Cheyne Walk,

Dear Mr. X.,

I cannot get out.

Will you come down here tomorrow afternoon at about five or six oclock?

Bring with you the words of welcome.

Have you seen Oscar's letter in last night's *St. James'*—also the terrible critique upon his book in the *St. James'* of Tuesday or Wednesday?

I am in a shocking hurry.

(Butterfly signature)

## CHAPTER VII

### FLOTSAM

ONCE upon a time I was sent to Mr. Scoones, the famous crammer for the Diplomatic Service, and I learnt how to write a precis but very little else. However, he had a monopoly of the tricks of the examination, so everybody had to go to him, and I found a number of interesting students whom I met later on at embassies during my travels. Lord Hugh Cecil was also there, a pale, unsociable youth who made no friends. When the time came for an examination there were nine candidates for one vacancy. I qualified third and was told I should have an appointment eventually; but I had the unhappy thought of going to a school of journalism which had just been started by David Anderson, who advertised himself as an ex-leader writer on the *Daily Telegraph*. His idea of instruction was to make us all write articles, which he corrected and sold to the press for his own profit. When I grew tired of this arrangement he told me that I could not come in without paying, but that I was quite welcome to pay without coming in. So we left it at that. One of his successful pupils was Francis Gribble, who has since done well. Another was Stuart Erskine, a younger son of Lord Erskine, and now an authority on Gaelic literature—an odd little man with a weak mouth and a face like a very old baby, proud of his pompous way of writing letters after the model of the eighteenth century.

After many travels in far countries I returned to the

husks of journalism. W. E. Henley was then at the height of his fame, editing the *National Observer* and encouraging a group of young novices—among whom were Kipling and H. G. Wells. So I thought he might encourage me. I chiefly remember him as a big lame man, with a curling Viking beard, a thick skin, especially about the neck, a deep voice and deep voluminous hands. As I told him many years later, to his considerable satisfaction, he was the only editor all of whose corrections I entirely approved. And he did edit! Every word, every comma was scrutinized, weighed, tested with the philosopher's stone until dross made a fair show of gold. He permeated the whole paper with his own style until at last it read as though it were written by one man.

Here is a typical postcard, whereby he accepted an article on the gypsies of the Balkans:

8/1/97.

The Rom. by all means. I shd. think so!

W. E. H.

Talking of Italian literature, he questioned me about Carducci and said somebody had thought that poet's work resembled his own. Carducci was then merely a name to me—all I knew was that he had written an ode to the devil—but I proposed a critical article—this meant buying all Carducci's works and reading them very carefully. It was the labor of weeks, for Carducci wrote an Italian of his own, but I was rewarded by Henley's approval and became a frequent contributor.

I remained friends with him for years and used often to visit him very late at night at Muswell Hill, where he would drink much whisky and hobble about the room discussing the Muswell Hill murder mystery, and the novels of Disraeli, which he said he loved. He had

rather a thick voice and I remember on two occasions I thought he said "loathe" and he had to repeat "love."

Approval from Henley was all very well, but I soon found that the few guineas I gleaned from highbrow papers did not go far towards the justification of expensive tastes. So I drew a bow at a venture and offered my service to Arthur Pearson, who had just started Pearson's Weekly, and secured an employment which lasted eighteen months.

Sir Arthur Pearson was always a remarkable man, a champion hustler, as Joe Chamberlain called him, never losing an instant of the day, or wasting two words when one would suffice, full of big and very little ideas, amazingly kind. Fresh air was his hobby. Not content with organizing outings for slum "kiddies" (as he called them) he invited his staff frequently to spend week ends at his country cottage in Surrey.

He proved an engaging and hospitable friend to me during the rest of his life. His blindness seemed to increase rather than retard his activities and joy of life. Indeed, once he had "learned to be blind," as he phrased it, he was quite sensitive about any recognition of his blindness, almost as if it were a shortcoming on his part to fail to disguise it. In this he resembled another charming blind man of my acquaintance, Parker Lowe, who used to walk up and down the terrace at Cap d'Ail with newspapers under his arm to convey the idea that he was about to read them. Pearson was specially fond of describing the scenery of places he had "seen" after his blindness, and he seemed to have taken in details of color and form far more successfully than other people. He did not like you to announce yourself when you met him, as he expected to recognize your voice even after a long absence. If he failed to do so, the tactful thing

was to provide him with a clue in the course of conversation. Nor did he like too much guidance when out walking, however crowded the thoroughfare. If a cab threatened to run him down he would resent being pulled back: you had to make some remark about the idiosyncrasies of traffic.

The last time I saw him was at a luncheon-party he gave at the Ritz. Wine had not been brought until nearly the close of the meal, and naturally he was not aware of this when he proposed an immediate adjournment to secure a good table for coffee in the lounge, but we were all amused by the face of one of the guests, who was a notorious lover of good liquor. Poor Pearson! he owed his calamitous death entirely to his pride in doing everything for himself. My chief relief from the monotony of office work came through persuading Pearson to send me on journeys for his paper—over to the great Fair at Nigni-Novgorod, and once to Constantinople, a remarkable enterprise for such a paper as his.

On my way to Russia in 1893 I stopped for a day or two at Leipzig and made the acquaintance of Baron Tauchnitz, who acted as British Consul there, the most fascinating German I have ever met or imagined. His English was irreproachable and his manners were worthy of the best type of an old-fashioned English gentleman. For once, I was almost tempted to withdraw my objections to the admission of foreigners into our consular service. It was his wide knowledge and appreciation of British literature that induced him to inaugurate the edition which has made his name famous. The great difficulty, he told me, arose at the outset from his having undertaken to publish at so cheap a price; but such was his perseverance that he clung to his original intention, even when the cost of production doubled and trebled,



as it did during the progress of his experiment. No copyright law existed in those days, and he was not legally bound to pay a stiver to the authors whose works he reproduced. But he made it an invariable rule to obtain their permission, and to pay no less for it, generally more, than would have been due in market overt. Lord Macaulay, he told me, received more from him than any other author, and I was shown a letter in which the romancing historian, for once attacked by modesty, remarked, "I am ashamed to think how many better writers have toiled all their lives without making a fifth part of this sum."

When I sent Baron Tauchnitz the proofs of an article about his work he wrote tendering his heartiest thanks and saying that he had "only a few very slight points to submit to my "kind consideration." One point was a reference to Macaulay as "for once in a fit of truthfulness." Tauchnitz wrote: "this passage we should be very glad if you would either omit or replace by another more favorable. We owe this to the memory of this great author, who was at the same time a near friend of ours. Could you not rather mention it as an act of his great modesty?"

I was also shown a letter to him from Disraeli containing the following characteristic phrases: "The sympathy of a great nation is the most precious reward of authors, and an appreciation that is offered us by a foreign people has something of the character and value which we attribute to the fiat of posterity. I accept your liberal enclosure in the spirit in which it is offered, for it comes from a gentleman whose prosperity always pleases us, and whom I respect and regard."

In reply to an inquiry about biographies of himself, Disraeli wrote him in 1870:

What are called "lives" of me abound. They are generally infamous libels which I have invariably treated with utter indifference. Sometimes I ask myself what will Grub Street do after my departure; who will there be to abuse and caricature? . . . I hope you are well. I am very busy and rarely write letters, but I would not use the hand of another to an old friend."

Dickens wrote him in 1860:

I have too great a regard for you and too high a sense of your honourable dealings to wish to depart from the custom we have always observed. Whatever price you put upon the book will satisfy me.

Thackeray wrote in 1856:

Don't be afraid of your English; a letter containing £—— is always in pretty style.

Carlyle, with his usual surliness, wrote:

The money account concerns me. Please attend to that, as already said. Friendliness and help cannot be paid; but money can and always should.

Charles Lever, being asked about a portrait for the edition, replied:

I believe such things are usually given to the world far less from any anxiety of the public to see the author, than for the author's own desire to be seen. Now I must confess that I have no longings on this subject, but believe that my trash will read just as well without the assistance of my countenance.

However, his objections seem to have been disarmed, for later on he wrote agreeing to a portrait for the Tauchnitz edition of "Jack Hinton": "It is not—at least, so say my friends—a resemblance and I can, myself, assure you that I do *not* squint—which it does most abominably."

In another letter he wrote, about the appearance of one of his books in the Tauchnitz edition:

I am charmed to see myself in my new costume and am once more reminded that to yourself is the honour of that discovery by which a novel has been made easy to the wrist and pleasant to the eye.

Longfellow wrote:

Your very generous addition to the original sum agreed upon between us, is pleasant to me, less for the sum itself than for the trait of character it reveals in you and the proof of your liberal way of dealing. The contingency, (of his employing another continental publisher) is about as remote as that in the case of one of Dickens' characters, who bought at auction a brass door plate with the name of Thompson on it thinking it possible that her daughter might marry a person of that name.

Anthony Trollope wrote in 1872, from New York:

On arriving here yesterday, I found by the *New York Morning Herald* that I had compromised my long lawsuit with you by accepting from you an enormous sum of money which made my mouth water. Of course, I have written to the paper to say that I never had a lawsuit or any difference whatsoever with you.

For a single novel, the highest price Tauchnitz paid was £400, to Lord Lytton—a very large sum, considering that it was a voluntary offering for the good-will of the continental rights.

Harrison Ainsworth, who enjoyed a great vogue as a novelist of the mid-Victorian era, was a special favorite of the Baron. One of the novels was devoted to the Flitch of Bacon, which I believe is still awarded at Dunmow in Essex to the happiest married couple. On the occasion of Tauchnitz's golden wedding, he dwelt with special delight upon the fact that Ainsworth had dedi-

cated this book to him and his wife with the inscription, "To the happiest couple I know."

With reference to the Baron's uniform generosity to authors, I may mention a conversation I once had in a train with Lord Stanhope, the historian. I happened to be reading his work on Queen Anne in the Tauchnitz edition, and, incidentally learning who he was in the course of conversation, I remarked that he probably thought ill of me for reading him in this edition. But he said that, on the contrary, Tauchnitz had treated him so munificently that it gave him as much pleasure to find himself read in that as in any other edition.

At Leipzig I also had a long talk with Baedeker, whom it was a surprise to find to be a real person instead of a household word. He was kind and agreeable, but had none of the aristocratic mannerisms of Tauchnitz. He most impressed me by his modesty and straightforwardness. The credit of the modern guide-book, he admitted openly, belonged to Mr. Murray, and the only advantage he claimed for his own publications was that they were better suited to travelers for whom economy was of importance. He also laid particular emphasis upon the fact that his guide books were alone in excluding advertisements. This had made their impartiality more conspicuous, and every inn-keeper in the world had now come to understand that the only way to obtain Baedeker's favorable notice was to deserve it. His agents were always instructed to travel incognito, and thus afford inn-keepers an opportunity of entertaining angels unawares.

In 1899 I spent about five months in Abyssinia. The journey would have had no interest to me if I had not been a novice to travel in the interior of Africa with a caravan. It was one long plod through deserts and tablelands like English parks, with only one town and a few

villages between Zaila on the Somali coast and Addis Abeba, the capital.

I had an audience there with the Emperor Menelik, "King of the Kings of Ethiopia," after riding three miles through rivers and ravines in a swallow-tail coat at six o'clock in the morning. He was a very black, pock-marked savage of great intelligence, whose first question was, "What present have you brought me?" The British were in great favor at his court chiefly owing to the wise diplomacy of Sir John Harrington, our Minister, though the French and Russians had sought to persuade His Majesty that the death-knell of our Empire was sounding in South Africa. However, Menelik had heard the same story from the same lips so often before that he was not to be deceived so easily. At the time of the capture of Omdurman the French informed him that the British army had been destroyed, and when the truth eventually reached him, he exclaimed, "What liars these French are!"

Meanwhile, journalism enabled me to renew relations with a fantastic, Richard Le Gallienne. I found him a most fascinating personality. We had reviewed each other's books appreciatively and exchanged polite letters of thanks. I told him we must meet some day as I wanted to say to him in the words used by Disraeli to Whistler, "Sir, you are a very wonderful man." Later (7 April, 1897), he wrote: "One day in Holborn your delightful article flashed spring for me across a wintry world. I often read you, but though I had been rash enough to praise you I had never hoped to win your praise. Imagine my delighted astonishment, therefore, when, wondering what it could be that could make you forget even Rhodes, glorious Rhodes, I suddenly fell into the arms of my own name. I do hope you will lunch



with me some day and keep your promise to call me wonderful."

On my way to visit the Emperor Menelik I received a paper called the *Puritan*, and wrote from Minnabella, Ethiopia (a muddy pool calling itself a well in a desert), to remonstrate with him for committing his pearls to a publication with so porcine a title. To this he replied in his dainty missal-hand:

Hotel Hespérides, Hyères, France.  
Monday.

Dear Mr. X.:

What wonderful addresses you get! I thought that I had found something rather pretty, but ETHIOPIA! But I am sure Ethiopia can be Ethiopia no longer—if *The Puritan*, or even a mere rumour of it, circulates there.

It is good of you to be so careful for me, and I agree with every stroke of your scourge.

Alas! I sold the thing—really rather a good thing, though against a church which I suppose you love, but which I fear—to a publisher, to do with as he pleased: and here are the first-fruits. Do you think *I* am happy?

Never mind! Nobody outside of Ethiopia seems to have seen the indiscretion.

Perhaps even you might care to come down to see my wife and me and two little girls, at a rather sweet—quite simple—old house at Chiddingfold, Surrey. Alas! I cannot find you any more Ethiopian name.

Always yours sincerely,

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

Here is an exquisite paper he wrote me entitled, "The Desire of the Star for the Moth":

"The desire of the moth for the star has been made proverbial by a great poet; but, so far as I am aware, no one has remarked that the attraction is mutual, and that perhaps the desire of the star for the moth in certain

cases is even more passionate than the desire of the moth for the star.

"Of course, there are very big successful stars who affect that the hero-worshipper moth is a nuisance, and build themselves about with bastions of privacy, through which no ray of their shining can reach the most persevering moth—but then, you see, they are so sure of their moths. I wonder if the time should come when the flocks of little pilgrims up to their dizzy radiance begin to slacken and the roar of moth-wings outside their guarded country seats to grow fainter—and it has happened so with some very great stars, indeed!—if they would not become a little insecure in their feeling of stariness, and perhaps even at last unshutter a window and let slip a beam of their celestial selves; lest the moths should grow discouraged and perhaps cease coming at all.

"I have heard that some stars of this magnitude charge the moth half-a-guinea for their photograph—strictly, of course, for the benefit of the hospitals. Such stars are, you can imagine, very sure of themselves. But there is another kind of big star that makes quite as fine a blaze as those of which I have been speaking, yet is by no means so unsocial; on the contrary is smilingly, even eagerly accessible to every moth that is so kind and appreciative as to take the trouble to call with its homage. It often, indeed, asks the moth to stay for lunch, and makes it promise to be sure to come again.

"For this kind of star press cutting agencies were invented, and my belief is that the secret of its affability lies hidden within its heart that it is not really a fixed star at all, but only a comet. It dare not, however, admit this, even in the silence of its own soul, so it seeks to drown the hideous whisper in the murmurous cloud of the moths. It is not particular as to the quality of its moths.

It cannot afford to be. Sometimes, if it really has any discrimination, it must notice with a chill, that the best moths, the moths of insight, are never to be seen at its levees.

"Those moths are probably to be found in attendance on some star whose radiance is not sufficiently garish to attract the public moth, but it is observed by those with eyes to see to be growing surely higher year after year, as from some organic center of immortal fire.

"Finally, there is a star in whom, more than in any of these, the desire of the moth is tenderly tremulous; the little new-born star, all blushing still with the wonder of its birth, and not daring yet to believe that it is a star at all. What a moment for that tiny, almost invisible star, when its first moth comes flickering softly up to it. Perhaps it was to encourage such frightened little stars, and those other neglected stars that have shone faithfully for years, with but a handful of worshipers, that moths were made. I am, etc.,

"RICHARD LE GALLIENNE."

In 1901 Le Gallienne seems to have removed across the ocean, for I find letters dated from 59-61 West Forty-fifth Street, New York:

Oh what a stupid, vulgar world it is—particularly, yes! you are right, in these "American colonies": though I like them better than you do. I am fascinated by their brute vitality and stimulated by the rush and roar of their lives. I find too a certain modern beauty and even charm in New York . . . But I must stop—lest I should never hear from you again!

How obstinately all this time the ocean—one ocean or another—rolls between us and forbids our meeting. Perhaps some day when we are hoary-headed old men we shall at last shake hands!

To this I replied from Brighton (16th September, 1922):

MY DEAR RICHARD

YOUR LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 16TH

Dear Mr. Le Gallienne,

I am following the fashion (for once) and writing my Reminiscences. This vulgar task has given me the joy of retrieving some of your exquisite letters, and the horror of finding that the last is dated April, 1901. In it you are so kind as to curse oceans which have kept us apart, and to express a hope that we may meet ere we are hoary. As I detect grey hair beginning to peep among my locks, I wonder whether 21 years must roll again before you return to these shores or whether I must make the effort of visiting our American plantations.

P.S. This can scarcely be called a brisk correspondence.

But though the ocean, or the fates have persisted in keeping me apart from Richard Le Gallienne, I have been more fortunate in the case of Montgomery Carmichael, a lord of language who sacrificed to consular duties in Tuscany thirty years which should have been devoted to the embellishment of our literature. For some years our acquaintance was confined to a correspondence in which he lavished counsels of perfection in the Olympian language of a seventeenth century cavalier. At first we wrote "Sir" and "Your most obedient humble servant," but before meeting we had reached the familiarity of pet names and "Yours affectionately." At last he came to London—or Babylon as he preferred to style the capital—and the hour of his visit was fixed. Long in advance I was all agog with excitement, picturing a mediaeval saint, a crusader, a dandy, with an atmosphere of ruffles and periwigs. When the door opened I nearly had a fit. Lo, a round man with a round beaming face, oozing geniality at every pore, cracking Rabelaisian jokes, exhilarating the most morose with his inexhaustible humor. The live Carmichael took my breath away after the epistolary artist and I had to tell him he was the most charming man I had never met.

But I soon recovered from the shock and promoted him to the first rank of my friends.

Oddly enough, the great hero of his boyhood had been Thomas Carlyle, and, after efforts worthy of an American journalist, he found a bookseller who arranged an interview. Young Carmichael was to take a parcel and insist on delivering it into Carlyle's own hands in his house at Chelsea. He expected to see him, to hear his gruff voice, to breathe the same air with him for a few minutes, nothing more. But the star had been warned of the advent of his moth and detained him for an hour, which was perhaps the happiest hour in his life, and still leaves a joyful memory in his present state of grace. At any rate, it has not interfered with the catholicity of his kindness or his unquenchable hunger to help all lame dogs over every stile.

Another person whose voluntary exile has been a loss to English letters is my wonderful friend Horatio Brown. When I first condemned myself to nine months of Venetian seclusion he was busied with the work of making a synopsis of the Frari archives for the British government, oddly enough in succession to another scholar of the name of Brown. And the oddest part about him is precisely that his name should be Brown. As his majestic old mother used to say, "All his blood is not brown." She was an heiress of the Macdonalds of Glen-garry, with a pedigree embracing all the finest families of the Highlands. In thought and manner and whimsical fancies he is a typical Highland laird as well as a poet and a dreamer. And he always persists in signing himself just H. F. Brown, in posing as "plain Brown," though there are few who find greater pleasure in social and literary successes.

He has a beautiful house on the Zattere with a view



of the rosiest skies and bluest waters across the lagoon to the Giudecca. Here he used to give the merriest parties at night, far into the night, bringing together the colony of British artists and young sprigs of Venetian nobility; also more solemn luncheons where his fellow supporters of the Anglican church were entertained. At one of these I was invited to meet Sir Henry and Lady Layard, with a gentle warning that her ladyship was not very pleasant to new acquaintances, in fact that she had a distinctly sour temper and might express herself quite disagreeably if I came up against any of her prejudices. However, when she had departed I remarked to Brown that I had found her quite charming. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "she was not very well to-day."

I began cross-examining the ex-Ambassador about his art treasures, then rather a sore subject, so he retaliated by snorting at me almost savagely when an accident happened to my chair. The story was that he had made the rounds of ancient monasteries in Italy and Spain, taking advantage of the innocence even of simple parish priests to acquire priceless pictures and images and carvings, in exchange for worthless modern copies.

Presently he recovered his temper and began teasing a bumptious young man, who bored us with his views on old Italian painters, Cimabue and all the rest of them. "Yes, yes, yes," said Layard, with well suppressed impatience; "but, in my humble opinion, no one of them could hold a candle to that marvelous master, Mortadella di Bologna. Where else can you find such chiaroscuro, such fragrance of composition, such palatable harmonies?"

The young man grew sorrowful and confused, for he had not lived in Italy, and knew not that Mortadella is the favorite sausage of the natives. We lured him on

to discuss it as an old master, and he made some wonderful statements with double meanings, which nearly choked us with laughter.

Brown gave us recollections of his bosom friend, Robert Louis Stevenson, at Davos, where he was undergoing a cure for consumption and writing "Treasure Island." He had made a mud map of the island all over the floor of a chalet, and would lie about there all day with a brandy bottle by his side, moving dolls about to represent his characters as he wrote.

When I last saw Brown in 1920, he remarked to me that the war was begun by one madman and ended by another—William and Wilson!

A friend of his told me of a visit paid him by d'Annunzio at the Garden of Japanese Lotus at Venice, when a certain Marchesa was among the guests. Overcome by the glamour of the scene, d'Annunzio broke out into one of his lyrical rhapsodies. Then the Marchesa leaned against one of the flowers, almost as tall as herself, and asked coquettishly, "Which is the more beautiful?" The poet smiled grimly and made no reply. But C., his friend and comrade in arms, could not resist murmuring, "*Quella che non parla*" (the one who does not speak).

When I was in Tunis I saw a good deal of Sir Harry Johnston, the British minister. In outward appearance, he was the mildest little man, dreaming of poetry and prisms. In reality he was one of our most successful pro-consuls, who had administered vast African empires with absolute powers of life and death.

He had a pet monkey, which he was teaching to talk English. I never heard it say anything convincing even in Simian, but it showed a sense of humor on the occasion of a wedding. While everybody was in church it crept into a dining room, seized the four corners of the table

cloth and reduced the whole banquet to a mass of ruins. When the guests returned, they found the little fellow perched on a pyramid of broken viands, wedding-cake, champagne bottles, crockery and all sorts of wreckage, talking proudly in an unknown tongue.

The Honorable Terence Bourke, one of Wilfrid Blunt's many cousins, was honorary British Consul at Bizerta, and proved a very hospitable host with an unique knowledge of the country. Here is a story of a Jinnee, such as one reads of in the "Arabian Nights," told to Bourke by an Arab friend:

"I was driving into Tunis not very long ago and had just reached the city gate when my carriage stopped and I found a negro, fifteen feet high, barring the way with a drawn sword. Alighting from my carriage, I asked the negro's will. 'You have,' was the reply, 'in your house an old chest containing papers. I wish you no evil; but if you refuse me that chest I must kill you and take it.' 'I will give you the chest,' I answered in alarm, 'but if you come to fetch it you will frighten all my children into fits.' 'Let that not trouble you,' returned the Jinnee—for a Jinnee it was—'place it on your roof to-night. I will fly down and fetch it.' I did as I was bid and, lo! in the morning the box had disappeared. I am sure that I was in full possession of my senses throughout the interview and my coachman is equally convinced that he beheld the Jinnee."

Sir Charles Dilke was one of the stars whose desire for moths might well have been in Le Gallienne's mind. There was never any journalist so obscure but Dilke would receive him and answer his letters and flatter him to the top of his bent; there was no journal so humble but Dilke would gladly accept a home in its pages.

Turning over a large bundle of Dilke's letters, I am

struck by their uniform unimportance, and the same applied to his conversation. He always expressed the obvious opinions of the vulgar; he never redeemed them by an original phrase or a flash of wit. He was one of the creations of mutual admiration societies, like the Souls and the Apostles who prophesied greatness for one another, and did so with such pertinacity that cleverness was usually taken for granted.

His pompousness was positively repellent. His success with women was common gossip, but I believe his conquests were restricted to servant-girls, whom he shrouded with anonymity when he boasted in his cups. His great scandal need not have banished him from society if he had not added cant to licentiousness. There was no necessity for him to receive Holy Communion as a demonstration of innocence while everybody knew he was guilty. The pricking of this windbag made a great sensation, for at one time he and Harry Cust were expected to go quite as far as Arthur Balfour and Lord Curzon.

When everybody knew that the Parnell scandal was brewing, a friend of mine asked Cardinal Manning how the Irish clergy would take its revelation and he is said to have replied, "If it's all plain sailing, there will not be a murmur, but they will all be up in arms if there are any embroideries as in the case of Dilke." These are obviously my friend's words, not Manning's, and remind me of a great speech, in which Archbishop Magee told the House of Lords he would be imperiling his immortal soul if he voted for the disestablishment of the Irish Church.

"Ripping speech of the Archbishop," a sporting young peer observed outside.

"Why, what did he say?"

"He said he'd be damned if he'd vote for the bill."

When I joined the Radicals for the 1906 election I found my old leaven sometimes made me unpopular with my new bedfellows. For instance, I could not help cat-calling at a meeting when John Morley started eulogizing Oliver Cromwell. I was thereupon assaulted by a fanatic named Fred Maddison and nearly thrown out of the hall. Lunching with Birrell next day I asked if he thought reverence for the regicide was an essential article of the Liberal faith.

"Not at all," he replied. "Why, I remember inspecting Cromwell's christening robes with Gladstone at Chequers. To tease the old man, I said, 'You see, Mr. Gladstone, that Cromwell was a Christian.' He flashed a glance of scorn at me and answered, 'I hear you say so.'"

During one of my candidatures for Parliament I happened to remark in a speech: "A certain flippant gentleman, who calls himself a Socialist and philanthropist, but is better known as a writer of plays which no one ventures to act, has been exercising himself in the half-penny papers and attracting undue attention. While many good people and some divines regard poverty as a crime, this fellow, Shaw is his name (laughter), is good enough to inform us that it is a disease."

As I have always made it a practice to avoid shrinking from the consequences of my actions, I sent the man a marked copy of the paper containing my speech. The reply was as follows:

Welwyn,

12th December, 1904.

Dear Sir,

Why on earth do you send *me* such stuff as this? You used to be a comparatively bright and clever person; but to go down to



a forlorn hope like A . . , with a labor candidate splitting your vote, and talk this abject party twaddle without even a pretence of being taken in by it is a needlessly expensive form of trifling. The only ray of hope for a Liberal in A . . is shed by my close friend and old colleague Sidney Webb there, who has captured the County Council seat. His vote is as much a Conservative as a Liberal vote; and he has got it by carefully avoiding the worn-out and openly disingenuous rubbish you have been unloading on the unfortunate electors. DON'T talk piffle about our wretched little revenue, like a republican cobbler declaiming against the Archbishop's salary and the Civil List. Send to the Fabian Society, 3 Clement's Inn, Strand, W. C., for Tract 5,—“Facts for Socialists,” and “A Democratic Budget” (only a penny each and you will get heaps of material for speeches that will be listened to. If you *must* drag me in—like a halfpenny journalist at a loss for an idea—talk of me as that great and good man, and old and tried friend of the working classes, etc. etc., Pretend that you and I and Webb were boys together and had the same aims and ideals. Heaven help you, you are about as fit to contest A . . as I am to command an iron-clad. You had much better try some other constituency and make a clean start with some serious policy. Even if you are defeated, you can help to educate the electors if you will only first educate yourself a little.

Yours faithfully,

G. BERNARD SHAW.

In my reply, I said:

It is neither polite nor charitable to assume that everyone who disagrees with you is disingenuous. I am much kinder in assuming your good faith at the expense of your intelligence. You are quite capable of believing what some of your colleagues openly avow—that the salvation of the people is to be secured by increased public expenditure and wholesale restrictions of liberty. But without liberty and without economy the people can never be happy or prosperous. You seem to have jumped to the conclusion that electors are as thoughtless and foolish as yourself; but I take leave to assure you that, in A . . at any rate they are quite capable of perceiving that national bankruptcy and unpractical panaceas are not passports to a golden age. The one instructive fact in your letter is that you and your fellow con-

spirators despise and distrust the people, who have long since found you out. I should indeed be disingenuous if I took your advice and represented you to be "great and good," when I believe you to be small and silly, or if I pretended that, even in the immaturity of extreme youth, I had ever shared what you are pleased to call your aims and ideals. A tried friend of the working classes you may be—tried and found wanting and cast away like an old shoe.

This was his answer:

10, Adelphi Terrace, W.C.

13th Dec., 1904.

Dear Sir,

It's no use: I know all your symptoms as a doctor knows measles. In addition to the Fabian tracts I mentioned to you, get also "The difficulties of Individualism," by Sidney Webb, and "The impossibilities of Anarchism," by myself. Read them carefully: they are worth it.

Do not be misled about A. . . I have taken charge of an A Committee Room too often on election day to have any illusions about it. If there be a tremendous swing of the pendulum at the next general election, a very good candidate with an unsplit vote may possibly get the seat from the Conservative, as Crooks got Woolwich. You, in your present phase, certainly won't do it; and I doubt if B. . . will either. But you may be reclaimable. It is useless for me to tell you now what is the matter with you: you would simply get huffed—a thing that no candidate should ever do. But since you appealed to me—for I presume you had some civil purpose when you sent me your card and the report of your speech—I have given you the best advice you can get at present. Your business now is to make friends, not to pick quarrels, and above all to get some fresh political material, and learn what are the realities of liberty and economy, happiness and prosperity. At present you know nothing—not even that you know nothing. You have had your fling whilst Webb and I and other hard stickers-at-it were drudging away at the social business. Don't be above learning from us: when you have taken it all in, you can start where we left off and get ahead of us. The fact that A. . . returned Webb unopposed to the County Council last time shows that his views and methods are the first things a sensible candidate should study.

I see that there are twelve sentences in your letter. Eleven of them state what you not only don't believe, but what you believe the exact contrary of. For the twelfth—which has won you this letter—use the tracts mentioned above.

Yours faithfully,  
G. BERNARD SHAW.

I took his advice so far as to apply for the pamphlets he recommended, receiving the following postcard in reply:

From the Fabian Society, 3 Clement's Inn, Strand, London, W. C.  
EDW. R. PEASE, *Sec.*

"A democratic Budget" is out of print, and will not be reprinted, as the views therein no longer represent the views of the Society. I enclose another tract."

On my reporting to Shaw the unfortunate result of taking his advice he wrote:

The Old House, Harmer Green, Welwyn.  
28th December, 1904.

Dear Sir,

My curse upon yon secretary for giving me away! I haven't looked at the tract for ten years—probably fifteen—and no doubt there is some impracticable stuff in it about direct taxation: for when one is young one does not think it pious to face the fact that you can only get money for public purposes out of people by cheating them at the tobacconists; but still, since Keir-Hardie tried to ballot for a Bill embodying the tract last session, and since the secretary let him do it, there must be some stuff left in it that is presentable.

Yours ever,  
G. BERNARD SHAW.

On my publishing the correspondence, Shaw wrote to the papers:

Sir,

I hope you will allow me to assure your readers that the publication of my letter to Mr. X was a piece of humourous cruelty

in which I had no part. I honestly gave Mr. X the best advice I could in his own interest in a letter obviously not intended for publication; and if he had quietly acted upon it, instead of sending it off to the papers, under the impression that the laugh would be against me instead of against himself, he might still have some chance of a seat—not A.—in the next Parliament. As it is, I am afraid his position is past praying for. But that is not my fault. I shall not pretend to be sorry that I have helped Mr. B., the accredited Labour candidate, to disable an opponent who, if he had played his cards skilfully, might have proved very dangerous; but still I counselled Mr. X. as fairly as I could have counselled Mr. B. (had he needed my advice); and now that Mr. X. has exploded himself out of all possibility as a successful candidate, it must not be supposed that the fatal correspondence was published by me or with my consent.

Yours, etc.,

G. BERNARD SHAW.

On my writing to point out to him that letters between public persons are never considered private unless so superscribed he wrote again with the heading "PRIVATE" five times underlined. In this he wrote genially,

I do not accuse you of all the moral implications of disingenuousness. It is a sort of artistic petulance, a love of *Jeux d'esprit*, that makes it amusing to you to say things that are so obviously untrue that it is impossible for either yourself or me to believe that you believe them in any serious sense of the word. You cannot afford to play that game in politics: You see the tremendous advantage it gives me. You airily throw a paper dart at me: I simply refuse to play the game, use it as a stone and brain you with it. Not magnanimous, but instructive.

One newspaper commenting upon this interchange of epistolary courtesies said it recalled the brief but demolishing letter of the American gentleman who thus addressed a business rival:

"Sir: My stenographer, being a lady, cannot take

down what I think of you; I being a gentleman, cannot express it; but you being neither, can readily divine it!"

Tom Hughes, the author of "Tom Brown's Schooldays," was an old friend of my father and a strenuous type of the "muscular Christianity" of the middle of the last century. My first recollection concerning him is of being brought up to have my curls patted when I was quite a small boy. Of course, he considered himself *the* authority on boys; and genial as he could be in sympathetic company, he was never so overwhelmingly genial as with a sympathetic boy. There was a regular formal procedure which he expected all his hosts to observe. All accessible boys were to be brought up to him, one at a time, and he must be told that they had expressed great anxiety to shake him by the hand. This was often a painful ordeal, for the muscles of his hands were like iron and he had theories about the expression of honesty and geniality by the hand-grip. Boys who shrank from the process were in immediate disfavor, for his ideal in a boy was "manliness," by which he really meant the antithesis, not of effeminacy, but of boyishness.

The procedure at the audience was semi-regal, and consisted in his putting a series of questions and then delivering a homily. This was the kind of thing: Where are you at school? Like it? Any good at cricket? Fine game—cricket. Makes boys manly. Do your duty, always speak the truth and then you needn't be afraid of anybody. The finale was a pat on the head, and in very satisfactory cases, a presentation copy of "Tom Brown's Schooldays." The latter did not fall to my lot, because he was dissatisfied with my interest in cricket; but someone else gave me a copy soon after, and I am bound to say I didn't understand a word of it. Of course, it had an immense popularity with boys, but not, I think,



until they had been thoroughly acclimated to school life. It was a wonderful book, just as "Dodo" was a wonderful book, because it sufficed to make the whole of the man's career. It made his name known wherever the English language is spoken, it paved his entrance to the House of Commons, it earned him his County Court judgeship which gave him more pride than any of his other honors. The book was a success, because it was the first thing of the kind ever invented, and because, though shallow, it was essentially alive. It enabled him to command his own prices for his other books, but none of them assisted his reputation, and "Tom Brown at Oxford" came very near to failure.

I once spent a day with him at Wotton while experiments were being made in water-divining, in which he took great interest. It was quite a sight to behold him puffing across the meadows in close pursuit of the diviner, a villainous-looking rascal, who ran about holding a willow-wand in front of him. The wand was supposed to twitch of its own accord when it passed over a spring, but I believe the man made it turn at what he considered a likely spot. Hughes believed in it implicitly and wrote the man a splendid testimonial in the *Spectator*. What most impressed him was the fact that the wand twitched when held over the chosen spot by a lady, but as the diviner was pressing the muscles of her wrist all the time this proved little. After experimenting as a water-finder the man made his case still less plausible by asserting that his wand was equally potent to discover gold. He placed some sovereigns on the ground and showed us that the wand twitched when he held it over them. But he shrank from a blindfold search for sovereigns hidden in the tennis lawn, though he was told he might keep what he found.

Tom Hughes was intolerant, of course. All people with strong views and a strong belief in themselves always are. But he had an extraordinary amount of self-control for a quick-tempered man. I often amused myself by trampling on his pet prejudices, and, though I could see he was displeased, he always answered me with a certain good temper. I think he rather welcomed an opportunity of emphasizing his views. He was a great, rather than a good talker, one of those people who insist on doing the lion's share of every conversation, and who take it for granted that everybody else will resolve themselves into an audience. His particular hobby was the American war, in which his partisanship for the north amounted almost to religion. Lowell was one of his greatest heroes, and he would spend hours reading the "Biglow Papers" to anybody who could be induced to listen. I remember a certain wet day in the country when he read this book aloud right through the afternoon and then again after dinner. He read well and knew it, but a long spell of "Biglow" was distinctly soporific.

As if to balance the exaggerated success of his once famous book, he seemed doomed to failure in every other walk of life, even when his abilities clearly warranted some measure of success. He was the type of man who often catches the ear of the House of Commons, but he was a dismal failure there; his colonization experiment in Tennessee was commercially unsound, but with a little luck his energy would have carried it through; and though no judge was probably ever more single-minded and anxious to do his duty, his rough and ready justice became a byword for constant reversal on appeal. He had a strong individuality, exceptional energy and versatility, and he was conscientious to a fault. But he had absolutely no imagination and his sense of humor was perverted.

The Reverend Robert Stephen Hawker, Vicar of Morwenstow in Cornwall, was quite a well-known personage in my youth, though he spent most of his life in his remote parish. His chief claim to fame was the composition of a poem called "Shall Trelawney Die?"—with its striking refrain about "Twenty thousand Cornishmen shall know the reason why." To this day, probably ninety-nine people out of every hundred are convinced that this was a contemporary ballad of the time of James II., and the composition was certainly plausible enough to deceive the very elect. Some of his other poems were almost as well worth remembering, including "The Carol of the Pruss," a cynical commentary upon the pious despatches of William I. during the Franco-Prussian war:

No sigh so sweet as the cannon's breath,  
No music like the gun!  
Here's a Merry Christmas to War and Death,  
And a Happy New Year to none!  
Thus saith the King to the echoing hall:  
'With the blessing of God we shall slay them all.'

When I stayed in his neighborhood I heard all sorts of stories about his eccentricities. He used often to swim out to a neighboring rock with a comb and a long wig and pretend to be a mermaid until one day he heard some sailors proposing to shoot "the strange beast." After that he thought it more prudent to abstain from this particular form of fun.

Dining one night with Lady Sykes at her house in Mayfair, I sat next to a lady whose name I caught only as Mrs. Gordon Lennox. She struck me as one of the most amusing and brilliant talkers I had ever met.

After dinner, when we were sitting on the sofa together she happened to mention her acting and I said in

all innocence, with a touch of condescension: "Oh! do you act? Yes, I should think you would act wonderfully. Do let me know when you are acting again as I should like so much to come to see you."

I thought she gave me an odd look, but she said nothing and it was only some weeks after that I learnt she was Marie Tempest, the most famous actress of the day. Much later I went up to her in the gambling rooms at Dieppe and wondered whether she would remember me. "Remember you!" she exclaimed with a merry laugh, "I assure you I shall never forget you."

My chief impression of conversations with Miss Tempest centers in the wonderful purity of her French and her knowledge of all the shades of Paris slang. In this she presents a striking contrast to Marie Corelli, whom I found in a great state of indignation over an article in the *Saturday Review*. It had enumerated many mistakes in French and Italian, summing them up with the phrase, "The French of Marie is even worse than the Italian of Corelli."

"Why, I was educated in France! I have known French from my earliest infancy!" she cried in great wrath.

Otherwise, I found her gentle and pleasing and full of the best intentions towards everybody in the world, except her reviewers. I should not credit her with vast intelligence, but she evidently possessed the gift of assimilating simple ideas in a way that makes them appeal to the lower middle class, now the chief arbiter of literature. That, of course, has been the prime secret of her success, as it was the foundation of the careers of such men as Pearson and Harmsworth and Newnes.

Before I went away she put me in the hands of her secretary to show me the wonders of her house. Amongst

these, perhaps the most highly prized was a collection of the manuscripts of all her immortal works. These were all kept in glass cases, like illuminated missals or some priceless codex of the gospels in a museum. The secretary pointed to them in turn with bated breath, saying, "This is 'The Master Christian'; here is 'The Mighty Atom,' " and so forth. However, I could conscientiously admire the clearness of the writing.

Arthur Severn, an uncle of Lady Birkenhead, used to tell me stories about Ruskin. Severn and his wife lived with the old man and tended him affectionately in the evening of his life. They must have been full of infinite patience to listen to all his dreary talk, but at last they discovered that they really could no longer endure his monotonous eulogies of Turner's water-colors. There was one in particular on the wall of the dining-room, which he singled out every day for his most fulsome praise. No man on earth, he kept repeating, could possibly have produced such a masterpiece. It was absolutely unique.

Ruskin used to lie in bed very late, so one morning Severn took out his paint box and made a copy of this wonderful picture. Then he took it out of its frame and replaced it with his own work. With great self-denial he said nothing about this for several days, though Ruskin persisted in his extravagant rhapsodies. At last, however, Severn pretended to be anxious about the picture and asked Ruskin to have a look at it as he feared perhaps the damp was affecting it and it might be losing some of its luster.

Ruskin hobbled across to the wall and subjected the picture to a long scrutiny through a variety of magnifying glasses. At last he turned to his tormentor and said: "No, no. Nothing could affect this priceless gem. The



more I look at it the more certain I am of its surpassing merits. Indeed, if it has altered at all, I can only say that the change is for the better."

Severn kept his countenance very well, but his wife was unable to conceal her merriment, and Ruskin, who always insisted on explanations of everything, however trivial, eventually forced her to confess the trick which had been played. He grew scarlet with fury and retired to his room at once, refusing to see either of them during many days.

I first remember Alexander Teixeira de Mattos, the prince of translators, as a long overgrown youth, rather like a note of interrogation, some thirty years ago. He spoke almost too perfect an English, with a long rolling indeterminate accent, which never entirely forsook him. He was rather poor and humble at first, sharing rooms with a friend in the Temple, where Oscar Wilde was a frequent guest. He took to joining all sorts of societies, which admitted him to omnibus functions. For instance, the Eighty Club invited him to crushes given by Mrs. Cyril Flower (now Lady Battersea), and other Liberal hostesses. He eked out his livelihood by writing correspondence for Dutch newspapers. Then he married the widow of Willie Wilde (Oscar's brother) and lived in her Chelsea house for the rest of his days.

He first found his feet by translating innumerable volumes of Chateaubriand at a wickedly low rate of pay. I forget how few shillings the thousand words he received, certainly not more than five. Summer and winter he rose in his dressing gown at four, and plodded away at his translation, in the tiniest of copper-plate handwriting, with a very pointed pen. And this brought him not only a small competency, but a great facility for translation. Later on he made lucrative contracts with Maeter-

linck, Couperus, Fabre, and other successful writers, until he became fairly well off.

He was one of the very few people with a sufficient command of several languages to translate their spirit as well as their phrases. I remember catching him out only once and he was much amused when I showed him the following passage in one of his books:

“ ‘Hang!’ said he, though he was not usually given to violent language.”

Evidently he had translated “Damn!” and the publisher’s copy reader, with the idiotic squeamishness of his kind, had made a characteristic correction.

Later on, Teixeira took enthusiastically to bridge, recording all his games and losses with his pointed pen in a ledger, and usually making £400 a year at the game. He told me he was always disappointed if he made less.

He was almost the only journalist I ever met who had no jealousy, and was always ready to help others with elaborate advice and useful introductions. The last time I saw him he told me with great delight that he had refused an O. B. E. for his war work in a Government Office.

## CHAPTER VIII

### BOTTOMLEY

MY first acquaintance with Horatio Bottomley was due to chance. Before 1906 I knew nothing about him except that he was supposed to be a typical City man, a kind of Colonel North, or Hooley, or Whittaker Wright, people quite outside my sphere. However, when I was an unpopular Liberal candidate, frowned upon by the party headquarters, and most real Liberals, who preferred the real democracy of my Labor opponent, I sent out a circular letter to all other Liberal candidates, whose chances were being imperiled by other Labor snakes in the grass. Bottomley received one of these letters automatically and replied that he would be very glad to help me, but that if he came to speak for me he would probably do me more harm than good. In this my local supporters readily concurred, for he was already fly-blown politically as well as financially in the eyes of the orthodox.

Something whimsical, however, about his letter impelled me to pursue his acquaintance, and I accepted his invitation to call upon him in the City. I found what seemed to be the typical City man, protected by crowds of clerks in an atmosphere of typewriters and telephones and copying presses. He looked very smug in a tight-fitting frock coat, and spoke with a gentle oily voice, telling me at a great pace how glad he was to know me, how little time he had to spare and how much he should like a long conversation if only we could fix up a day.

Still knowing nothing whatever about him, I suggested his luncheon with me at Romano's, for which he seemed an ideal guest. It turned out to be his regular haunt and I detected a covert glance of surprise at such an invitation from an ingenuous person like myself, a Liberal candidate, obviously the pet of the Nonconformist ministers of a smug suburb. His eyes opened still more widely when we sat down to lunch and I ordered champagne for him without consulting him. I imagined that all City men drank champagne for lunch and I did not know that it was his own particular beverage. He made a feeble protest but the result was that I soon had him in precisely the right mood, full of amusing anecdotes and genial indiscretions. I soon found also that he was in the midst of his own atmosphere. He seemed to know all the frequenters of the place intimately, all the shady men and still more all the much shadowed ladies.

The scene was what passed at the time for glorified gayety. I noticed that everybody drank champagne, selecting it by its price on the list, rather than by the year or the vintage. Every available inch of space was occupied, the waiters were hurried and familiar, the food was indifferent and costly. The whole atmosphere might be described as one of plush and powder, conflicting perfumes and bedraggled plumes. All the women appeared to have been made out of the same mold. They wore almost the same clothes, they showed their teeth in the same idiotic grin, their eyes leered in the conventional theatrical manner. Wherever you met them, whether in a church or a train or a Sunday paper, you could never have had one instant's hesitation about them. They were all hall-marked, music-hall-marked, branded, molded, stereotyped, petrified as ornaments of the chorus of some Fragility theater of varieties.

It was clear from the outset that Bottomley delighted in them, and when I came to know him better I thought it strange that he should invite people to come and talk business with him in such a distracting place. While discussing some intricate point of politics or finance his eyes would be wandering over the room, gazing with fervor at some artificial actress, almost weeping in his infatuation over the airs and graces of a marionette.

After watching him for some time I could not restrain my laughter. "You remind me very much of my bulldog," I said. "I have seen him look just like that when I have put a piece of sugar in front of him and told him it is on trust."

"I am afraid your natural history has been neglected," he replied, still gazing at the wearer of a hat like a tea-tray. "Sugar for a bulldog, indeed! No, sir, meat, meat, meat! What an irreverent chap you are! Do you mean to tell me that you don't think that girl a vision of radiant loveliness? Would you not sell your immortal soul for a single smile from those lips of liquid vermillion?"

I made a vain attempt to discover what the particular attraction might be, pointing out what poor company actresses usually are. They cannot talk about anything but their legs or their plays, they are not nice to look at, and they smell of stale scent. All he could tell me was that they afforded a psychological study, by which he probably meant physiological.

He compared them favorably with society ladies, who, according to him were always on the make. He told me a story of his attendance at a royal garden-party, when, mooning about by himself, he was suddenly beckoned by three great dames, perfect strangers to him, seated chattering on a bench.



"Come here, Mr. Bottomley," one of them cried. "We want to talk to you. Everybody says you are very rich and very ambitious. Look here, wouldn't you like to give a luncheon party and entertain the Prince of Wales?"—meaning Edward VII. "We are the people to arrange it for you if you will make it worth our while."

As it happened, probably alone among men of his class, he had no ambition whatever to entertain the Prince of Wales. He tried to explain this to them, but without the faintest success. They merely thought that he shrank from providing the amount of baksheesh which they would need. He said he was sorry to disappoint them, and they tried without much success to make him uncomfortable.

I do not know how much this story should be discounted, but I have always found Bottomley full of reverence, almost shy in the presence of anybody with a title, and I have never known him to fail to respond to the advances of any woman. If this incident occurred at all, I am sure he promised them all they asked and then forgot all about it.

Jessica, Lady Sykes, was one of the most remarkable characters of the period before the war. In many ways she was more like a man than a woman, with a command of language that would have made her preëminent among the troops in Flanders and a stock of smoking-room stories that would have made her a welcome contributor to the *Winning Post*. She used to do all sorts of eccentric things. For instance, one day at a race-meeting she suddenly took a fancy to a race-horse and bought it for many thousands of pounds. There was some trouble when her husband refused to pay for it, and I understand that that was one of the main causes for her separation. Sir Tatton was a still more eccentric

character, and, apart from his habit of wearing half a dozen overcoats at once, he was by no means generous with his millions. His wife was full of knowledge and judgment about foreign affairs and wrote excellent articles of extreme virility, being especially impatient of the gush and sentiment of the age. Her chief friend and hero was Lord Charles Beresford, on whose behalf she cherished the deadliest hatred for Admiral Sir Percy Scott.

I think it was chiefly for the sake of Beresford that she showed anxiety to meet Horatio Bottomley, though she sang his praises loudly, proclaiming him the ideal type of manliness. For some reason or other Bottomley did not want to meet her. He was at that time very busily cultivating the society of Vincent and Reginald Eyre. I remember saying to him one day, "You are looking ill. What on earth is the matter with you?"

"Yes," he said, "I have gone all to pieces. I've no appetite. For the last three weeks I've been living on air."

"Vincent or Reginald?" someone unkindly inquired.

He certainly did obtain large sums of money, reducing the brothers Eyre from great affluence to the verge of poverty. Reginald, being Percy Scott's flag-lieutenant, was specially attracted because Bottomley afforded him an opportunity of airing his chief's grievances in *John Bull*, and when the Eyres threatened legal proceedings for the recovery of some of their money, Bottomley hinted that he would make things unpleasant for Scott, charging him with the publication of official secrets.

All this probably interested Lady Sykes, though she did not tell me so. At last I arranged for both of them to lunch with me at my flat in Knightsbridge, and it was certainly a very amusing meal. Bottomley's hesitation seemed to be due to his dread of anything approaching

"society," and a title probably frightened him, for he appeared in a tight-fitting frock-coat and wore quite a Sunday-go-to-meeting smile. For a long time he was remarkably silent, though Lady Sykes chattered on in her most manly way about all sorts of interesting things. Eventually, under the influence of champagne, they both warmed up and let themselves go on the dangerous topic of religion.

Bottomley, not having yet announced his remarkable discovery that, perhaps, after all there may be a God, talked with a cynical smile from the extreme atheist standpoint. Lady Sykes, possessing all the zeal of a Catholic convert, crossed her legs and spluttered and kept on repeating, "Oh! Mr. Bottomley, how can you say such things?" Her admiration seemed to overcome her prejudices, but she thought she had baffled him when she dwelt upon the goodness and reasonableness of Christ.

All he said was, "Made rather a mess of his life, didn't he?"

And that ended the debate rather abruptly.

His manner with women was certainly unique. He had an ingrained habit of unnecessary flirtation. Within five minutes of his making the acquaintance of any woman he met, he would be patting her hand, giving her some friendly nickname, almost calling her by her Christian name; and that quite regardless of her age, fascinations or desire to attract. If he was not trying to convey an impression of courtship he would be suggesting an innocent comradeship or a sort of paternal relation. And nearly every woman seemed to like it. She might laugh over his impudence when relating the matter to her friends, but she felt flattered, and he certainly enjoyed a reputation as a conqueror in his relations with the sex. Even quite serious people refrained from snubbing him,

but put him off with extravagant flattery or friendly chaff which encouraged him to persevere.

To look at him one would never imagine that he could have any success with women. He was small and fat and gross, with a thick bilious skin and small habits which were far from pleasant. But there was something powerful about his massive face, his broad temples, the defiance of his leviathan nostrils, his restless sea-blue eyes, the resiliency of his velvet expression. His long upper-lip was almost that of a baboon or an Irish peasant, but he seemed to win every heart by his strange silvery accents, by a caressing language, by a familiarity that was almost vulgar.

Though he was extraordinarily receptive, painfully anxious to improve his diction and manners, there were certain solecisms which he never contrived to overcome. For instance, nothing could cure him of saying, "Reely," and "If I had 'ave been," though he was far more punctilious than most precious writers about the right place for an adverb in a sentence. This was quite a fad with him, almost to the verge of pedantry. If he heard someone say, "I only heard that when I came in," he would lean forward with a mischievous smile and whisper, "I beg your pardon, but I suppose what you mean is, 'I heard that only when I came in.'"

His crackling laugh was almost unpleasant, but the tones of his voice were irresistible, especially with crowds. I should describe him as a little man with a great face, but the greatness was not obvious at first sight. I remember telling him once after I had known him for some years that I still found a difficulty in remembering what he was like.

"A Scotch verdict, eh?" he replied indifferently. "At any rate, no one has yet compared me with Napoleon,

which I understand is the ambition of Harmsworth and other adventurers, who rely on brushing their hair untidily over their foreheads. But you remind me of a meeting I attended in a remote part of the country. A friend of mine heard the crowd discussing me and a few thought I was like Lord Rosebery. But when I arrived there was a unanimous cry of 'Herbert Campbell!'—the low comedian, you know."

He was a mass of contradictions. He combined levity with determination, sentiment with cynicism, courage with carefulness, good nature with implacability. A thing about him I liked greatly was his boast that he was never angry, worried or frightened. During many years, though I have seen him exposed to great vexations, the strongest language I have ever heard from his lips was, "Too bad!" He explained this by saying that swearing afforded no relief to his feelings, whereas loss of temper had the effect of making people ill. In the same way, he thought that worry led to premature old age, and hatred harmed you much more than it did the object of your resentment. This did not mean that he would not bear grudges against people and cherish them very thoroughly for a long period of years, but he thought the object of a grudge was to hurt somebody else rather than yourself. "I always sleep soundest when things are at their worst," he once said to me.

As to his claim to courage he was certainly quite indifferent about public opinion, but I should not say he was physically brave. He would always do anything to avoid a scrimmage, and all he said when a man knocked him down in the Strand was, "Don't be ridiculous." People have told me that, in common with many otherwise sensible people, he went in terror of air-raids, which were probably about as dangerous as thunderstorms; but I can



vouch for the fact that he never turned a hair when he went across country at seventy miles an hour in a badly driven car.

He professed great fondness for dogs and his animals were certainly devoted to him, but I was surprised one day when his car ran over a dog and he refused to stop or go back. I described the scene to him, a poor little beast writhing in the middle of the road and an old widow wringing her hands in misery by its side; but all he said was, "We couldn't do anything if we did go back; besides we are already late for lunch."

One of his favorite stories was about his early days, when he was a tally-man in the East End. He was in arrears with his rent and his wife awaited him anxiously on the doorstep one Saturday afternoon when he should have brought home his week's wages. But on his way he had been tempted into buying a bulldog and brought that home instead.

"I was so angry," Mrs. Bottomley chimed in, "that I picked Florrie out of her cot and threw her at his head." Florrie, now the beautiful Mrs. Cohn, does not, however, seem any the worse for the experience.

In August, 1908, I called on Bottomley one morning and he insisted on my going with him to Banbury. F. E. Smith (now Earl of Birkenhead) had suggested his bringing a friend to keep him company on the long motor journey, and Bottomley had suggested me, whereupon Mrs. Smith had wired, "Delighted." We went like the wind, averaging well over thirty miles an hour, and one mile which I timed took only sixty-five seconds. But we had started so late that even so we found lunch half over. Mrs. Smith's face was strangely familiar to me. After a few minutes, she said I should not remember but that she had known me twenty years ago at Mentone when she

was a tiny person with a pigtail. It was her voice more than anything which enabled me to recognize her, and I said, "Your name wasn't Furneaux?" This pleased her vastly, for she said she had feared she would have to explain for hours who the Furneaux were. Then we talked about all the incidents of her childhood, how we had found a blue frog, and had made ourselves ill by tasting some castor oil we had picked. She told me how her mother had reprimanded her severely for coming downstairs in her nightdress when I came to call late one evening. She reminded me that I had nicknamed her "the Brat"; but when I suggested continuing the name she grew angry and said, "You dare!"

They had just been staying with Freddy Guest and gave a vivid description of a fire which had taken place during their visit. Mrs. Smith said that Mr. Churchill took command at once and his voice could be heard giving orders and drowning the noise of the water pipes. She described Lady Dorothy Howard running about in a wet clinging nightdress and compelling Eddie Marsh, Mr. Churchill's secretary, to rescue pictures, much against his will. Meanwhile F. E. stood on the lawn in his pajamas watching the salvage of the cellar and criticizing the vignettes as they appeared.

After lunch the Smiths unwisely consented to come part of the way back with us and Bottomley told his chauffeur to put on all possible speed. The result was that we were tossed like shuttlecocks up to the roof and our eyes and noses were choked with dust. When at last Mrs. Smith emerged she gasped out that she had never had such an experience in her life and hoped never to have again.

When I was at Marseilles in 1914 I learned that F. E. had just come so I asked him to lunch at my hotel. He replied that he would be delighted to do so if he might

bring Neil Primrose with him. They made quite a sensation with their red tabs and resplendent uniforms in my little pot-house by the quay, where we had a very merry meal, and I introduced them to the *soupe aux poissons* for which the house was famed.

I expressed my surprise that Smith should ever have become so intimate with Bottomley and have fought all his cases for him, especially as his fees must have been very difficult to collect. He surveyed me with great astonishment and burst into a hearty laugh. "Do you know," he said, "I have never once gone into court for Bottomley without making very sure that the money was there."

Then we recalled the case of *Crosland v. Bottomley*, in which F. E. had appeared for the printer of an alleged libel. On that occasion the judge was Mr. Justice Darling. I do not know what a judge's salary is, but I feel sure that Darling would earn ten times as much on the music-hall stage. Harry Lauder is a bore in comparison, even Dan Leno was not a patch on this prince of jesters. Darling never moves a muscle while he is convulsing his court by amazing drolleries. Listen to this. An argument had been going on about the temerity of one of the defendants in suing a Scotsman for £2,000, and counsel for the plaintiff was anxiously alleging greed, unkindness, and other improprieties.

"I think I can help you, Mr. Hayes," said His Lordship, in affable, engaging tones. Hayes fell into the trap at once and offered effusive thanks.

"I am half a Scotsman myself," the Judge went on. "And therefore I can throw some light on the position. There is an old proverb in the north that ye canna tak the breeks of an Hielanman."

In the *Crosland* case there was some fun over the non-

appearance of the plaintiff. His counsel made every apology, saying that he had hunted high and low for him, even despatching his little son to look for him. Thereupon Bottomley rose and stated with great solemnity, "I think I may be able to assist the Court. The reason why the little son has been unsuccessful is that the plaintiff is probably now seeking sanctuary in a place where little sons are not admitted until they have reached the age of fourteen."

Then Bottomley went into the box to give evidence on his own behalf. Scarcely had he been sworn than Hayes began to propound the first of his carefully prepared questions. But Bottomley interrupted him with great courtesy. "The learned counsel is evidently a novice in his profession and I may perhaps be allowed to inform him, to the advantage of his future career, that it is usual in law-courts for evidence in chief to come first and cross-examination to follow after."

When the laughter had subsided, Bottomley went on to make statements on oath far more libelous than any which had appeared in the alleged libel.

Once when I was staying with Bottomley at The Dicker, his place near Lewes, he introduced me to Sir David Ferier, a notorious vivisectionist, who had come to attend his daughter. Knowing my views on the subject Bottomley persisted in making me discuss the question. Ferier began politely and persuasively but made no attempt to disguise the horrors he had committed in what he considered the interests of science. After several vain attempts to turn the conversation I left the group and sat on a rug by the fire, talking to Bottomley's beautiful collie, and incidentally talking at Ferier.

"Don't be afraid, old man, I will look after you. You are under my protection. I will see that they don't tie

you down on the table and gash you and torture you and gloat over your sufferings in the interests of science. . . .”

I elaborated the horrors which threatened him until Ferier arose and announced that he thought it was his bedtime. He came up to me holding out his hand and saying he hoped there was no ill-feeling, but I put my hand behind my back and affected not to see him. I suppose this was going rather too far, for presently Jeff Cohn, Bottomley's son-in-law, returned from seeing the doctor to bed and made quite an indignant protest. Ferier, he said, was a very distinguished man and I ought to have treated him with more respect as a fellow guest and a person older than myself. It was in vain for me to argue that there was no discourtesy in refusing to grasp a blood-stained hand and that the man's age was no excuse for his abominations. I was condemned to have my breakfast in my bedroom next day and to keep out of the way until the distinguished scientist had departed.

Cohn was quite sulky all that day and I came to the conclusion that he was really the host at The Dicker, though Bottomley always invited everybody there as though the place belonged to him. The fact was, I believe, that financial difficulties had compelled him to hand it over, at least nominally, either to his daughter or her wealthy husband. That did not prevent him from inviting large parties of his constituents down there and impressing them with the magnificence of the gardens and lawns. It was certainly a very beautiful place, unspoiled by a certain number of new-rich inspirations, such as a mechanical organ in the hall and a painfully artificial island in the lake.

Cohn began to melt after dinner when I agreed to join him in a game of baccarat. Since Bottomley's conviction he has been represented by his spiteful biographers



as a desperate gambler, who wasted his substance—or rather other people's substance—on gambling. To anyone who knew Bottomley intimately this is absurd. I can only conclude that one biographer—a common clerk, whose chief duties amounted to valeting on journeys, and whom I never even met during a long intimacy with Bottomley—was not admitted into his private circle.

I remember going with Bottomley into the rooms at Monte Carlo on one of the few occasions when he entered them. It was after a wonderful Christmas dinner which he had given at the *Hotel de Paris* to a large and miscellaneous company. Relying on my knowledge of gastronomy he had begged me to confer with the *chef* and draw up the *menu*, and I think he was quite disappointed to find that I had omitted turkey and plum-pudding. However, it was a very good dinner, and he was in specially good humor, even consenting, rather against the grain, to come and watch the others play roulette. To my surprise I found that he knew practically nothing about the game, and he did not feel the slightest temptation to stake the smallest coin. However, when one of the ladies twitted him with not being a sportsman, he turned to me and asked me to stake £20 for him. I did not much want to do this, as I did not know when I should see the money again if he lost. However, he had given me a very good dinner, so I pulled out some notes and asked him where he would like me to stake them.

"Anywhere you like," was his bewildered answer.

"Shall I put them on Red?"

"Anywhere you like, I know nothing about the game, and care less."

Accordingly I put £20 for him on Red, he pocketed his winnings and resolutely refused to stake again.

In much the same spirit at The Dicker, when Cohn

produced cards and invited his father-in-law to join us, the answer was an attitude of indifference. It would be too much to say that he did not know one card from another, but he was certainly unacquainted with the rudiments of baccarat. I had to explain to him exactly what he had to do. Cohn, after the manner of rich City men, produced a great wad of banknotes, perhaps five hundred pounds in fives and tens and twenties. I had about five pounds in my pocket. Bottomley had nothing at all and Cohn resolutely refused to give him credit. "Not a bob, not a halfpenny," he said quite rudely. "I know you too well."

"All right," I said, "we'll divide what I've got, and see whether we can't skin this bloated millionaire."

And for a time it seemed as though we were destined to accumulate riches. We had eights and nines almost every time and in less than half an hour we each had a comfortable pile of notes in front of us. Cohn was evidently very anxious to get them back, but I left it to Bottomley to decide whether we should give him the chance or reduce our stakes and make sure of a handsome profit. According to the reputation given Bottomley by his biographers, this greedy man, who could never resist the chance of pocketing money, would instantly have announced that he wanted to go to bed. But not a bit of it, he went on and on until he had lost all his winnings, borrowed mine, and restored them to the maw of our insatiable banker. And all this without any of the gambler's craving for either winnings or excitement. He played with the utmost indifference, much as I have seen him playing skittles on the pier at Brighton, for shillings with a number of young ladies.

Bottomley's attitude towards money was a strange mixture of generosity and greed. I have known him take

the last penny out of his banking account to supply someone's urgent need, without any regard for the feelings of his secretary, whose business it was to provide for outstanding checks. Every morning when banks opened the secretary would put himself into communication with the manager to find out what checks had been presented and what balance there was to meet them. When, as usually happened, the balance was insufficient, the secretary had to bestir himself and make good the difference. Sometimes he would have made his calculations so skillfully that he could enjoy his breakfast with confidence that there would be no need to start borrowing for the emergency. Imagine his shock to find that Bottomley had already given away the balance, and all the labor had to be begun over again. On the other hand, I have known Bottomley to play all sorts of tricks to induce intimate friends to buy a few worthless shares out of which he might have made a small profit, to their great inconvenience. When asked for any favor he made a practice of agreeing at once. "Consider it done," was his invariable phrase, and there was nothing more to be said. But whether it would ever be done was quite another matter.

There seemed no method about his money matters, everything depended on the inspiration of the moment.

On the whole, I should describe him as generous. I remember accompanying him to Sandown Park for the first meeting of the jumping season, at which his horse Adansi had become a standing dish as the winner of the first race. He had told everybody to back it, as he always did when he had a good thing, and I was looking forward to securing a nice sum. However, we arrived rather late and he had some ladies in tow. With them luncheon was much more important than racing, so he deposited them

in the dining-room with me to look after them while he went to attend to his bets.

"I shall be back in a moment—certainly before the first race, which I specially want you all to see," he said. But time went on and there was no sign of him. The voices of the bookmakers died away, cries of "They're off" resounded through the ring and still our host did not return. I had been particularly anxious to see the old horse continue his wonderful record, but the ladies were immovable. One race meant as little to them as another, and they were not to be beguiled away from the good fare which lay before them. It was a disappointment, but there was nothing to be said or done.

At last, when Adansi had won comfortably and preparations were well advanced for the second race, Bottomley came in full of smiles and apologies. As we made our way out on to the lawn he whispered to me, "I'm sorry I couldn't get back, but I put a tenner on for you as I felt sure you would want to back it." Naturally, I regarded this as a genial joke, but to my surprise I found next week that he had actually credited me with the full amount.

When I went with him to race-meetings I was struck by the way in which all the bookmakers seemed anxious to do business with him. This even when nobody else in the world would have given him any credit at all. For one reason, he was quite a fool about horses and provided a regular revenue to bookmakers, especially as he made an exception in their favor and always paid them punctually when he lost, at whatever cost to himself. Though far from squeamish about any other creditors he had a very strict code of honor about paying his bets, and I have always understood that this was the main explanation of his difficulties. For a man who prided himself on his

business abilities, and cherished ambitions to become the head of a business government which should set the national finances for the first time on a sound basis, he was a constant surprise in his transactions with money-lenders. When he went bankrupt, he told me he had filed his petition as the only possible relief from the exactions of those harpies.

"At the end of last year," he told me one Christmas, "I owed them £60,000. During this year I have paid them off £40,000, and, though I have not had another penny from them, I now find myself owing them £90,000. It really isn't good enough."

One of the great sensations of the turf was a match between his horse Le Blizon and Sundridge. For some reason or other the whole country seemed to be interested and enormous sums were bet on the result. Among the strongest partisans of Sundridge was my friend Gerry O'Shea, who insisted on laying Bottomley a small fortune—I am not sure it did not amount to £10,000—in spite of every discouragement from Bottomley himself. Even after the bet was made, and Bottomley was practically certain of winning it, he kept urging Gerry to lay it off elsewhere, and this though they were not intimate friends and there was no special reason why he should wish to do him a good turn.

As a matter of fact, Bottomley knew very little about horses. One Sunday he took me with a party round his stables at Alfriston. Batho, his trainer, said, "I am glad you've come, sir. We're rather worried about that mare of yours, Airs and Graces. I should like you to look at her."

Bottomley entered her box pompously and went through the usual performance in a way that would have been very convincing on a film. He strutted about and



peered at every point of the animal. Finally, he stroked one of the mare's hocks in the most professional way.

"Seems a bit swollen," he declared, oracularly, at last. Then he looked up for approval and saw that several of the lads were tittering, while Batho bit his lips very hard.

"What's the matter?" was the suspicious inquiry, with a characteristic inflation of the nostrils.

"You've g-got hold of the wrong leg, Guv'nor," and peals of ribald laughter ensued. But the astute owner was by no means amused and went off in high dudgeon.

One evening I stayed with him very late to celebrate the birthday of his favorite actress, and for once he was slightly the worse for liquor. Here it may be as well to mention that his biographers have been very unfair in suggesting that he was always more or less in his cups. Indeed, I think that the occasion I refer to was the only one during many years when I saw him in the least fuddled. We drove off together, arranging that I should drop him at his flat and drive on to my house. When we reached the Haymarket I suggested that we should stop at one of the all-night chemists and buy him one of the mixtures known as "soberers."

"Do you *reelly* think it'll do me good?" he asked anxiously. I got out first and held out my arms to help him. He seemed grateful for this and was all the better for his medicine, as there was no need to help him again at his flat. I thought no more of the incident, but next day at lunch he had concocted quite a funny story about it, reversing the parts and making me out so hopelessly the worse for liquor that he had had to carry me into the chemist's shop and hold me in a chair while restoratives were being administered. The wealth of detail with which he embroidered this story proved the vivacity of his imagination.

The people he invited as his almost daily guests for lunch, were a motley crowd. In the office they were known as "the free-fooders," and I should imagine that their interest in his sumptuous banquets was restricted to the fact that they had nothing to pay. Never have I met anyone with so extended a sense of hospitality. His one endeavor was to provide the best possible dishes imaginable. On the twelfth of August, for instance, he would make quite a fuss if grouse at two or three guineas a bird were not available.

Almost invariably the proceedings began with the formula, "I hope you won't mind, but this happens to be my birthday, so I am ordering a little champagne." And he seemed to have a birthday every day of the week. Once he asked me whether I liked champagne or would rather have something else. To tease him I said that I usually drank champagne because I was unfortunately not rich enough to afford claret. Whereupon he took the hint at once and ordered magnums of Château Lafitte 1874. But it was necessary for him to explain to the free-fooders what a super-luxury was being offered, and as soon as he saw that they turned up their noses he ordered sparkling wine for them.

Another incident I remember was his sending for the manager after lunch to complete the details for a big dinner he was giving in the restaurant that evening. He ordered Clicquot 1900 for the upper table and some very inferior vintage for the rest of the room. There was a good deal of talk about this, and he remarked, "I don't want to be mean, but it makes a bit of difference when you are entertaining eighty people, and I'm sure most of them won't know the difference." Accordingly, I was amused when dinner-time came to notice three of these luncheon guests seated among the inferior crowd. If

they had not heard about the preparations they would certainly not have felt aggrieved.

Among the people at lunch there were usually two or three influential constituents from South Hackney. One of them was fond of remarking, "Though I haven't had much of an education, I do pride myself on my *pronunciation*." Then there was a furrier from the east end of London, whose only contribution to the conversation was an occasional snuffle. Bottomley's favorite actress was usually the only woman present. He himself did most of the talking, taking as much trouble to be brilliant and agreeable as though vast interests were at stake. After the meal he would often summon any acquaintances he could espy at neighboring tables for coffee and old brandy. Then the exchange of repartee would often become quite lively, as he had a gift of extracting wit from the dreariest people. Even when his jokes were not of the newest he would contrive to give them a turn of his own and make them quite acceptable.

One joke, which he did not relish, was the perfectly innocent misprint of his name in some newspapers as Hotario Bottomley, and for a long time all references to hot air were considered bad taste.

One of his favorite anecdotes, which I believe other people have told against themselves, was somewhat as follows: "When I first started in business, my manager came to me and said, 'I am afraid we must get rid of that office boy, sir.' 'Why, what has he been doing?' 'He's been stealing the stamps.' Then I patted him on the shoulder and said, 'Come, come. You mustn't be so hard on him. Remember we must all begin somewhere.'"

Then there was the Charles Peace story, which I have heard as a personal reminiscence from at least half a dozen journalists—and have even related as one of my

own when lecturing to the troops in Macedonia. "One of my first jobs on the staff of a newspaper was to attend the execution of Charles Peace. He came down very jauntily, thanked the Governor for all the consideration he had shown him, took an affecting farewell of the chaplain, and said good-by to each of the warders in turn. Then he turned and surveyed us journalists, who were gathered in a group on one side. 'Gentlemen of the press, I believe,' he remarked with great dignity. 'I need not say good-by to you, for—*we shall meet again!*' "

Here is a story Bottomley would have enjoyed. Soon after his sentence, I heard two villainous looking tramps discussing his case in the tube.

"Garn!" said one, "you never knew Bottomley."

"Wot?" returned the other, with a murderous scowl, "Me not know Bottomley! Why I was at Eton wiv 'im."

I remember a rather pathetic scene at one of his lunches. Champagne was flowing, we were enjoying the best of fare, the ladies glittered with precious stones, altogether it was an atmosphere of almost indecent prosperity. Bottomley took out a pocketbook and extracted a frayed and faded paper which he proceeded to pass round in silence. It was a printed appeal on behalf of "HORATIO BOTTOMLEY, aged 4, son of a journeyman tailor and a washerwoman, both very respectable persons," for admission to a charitable institution. We were all affected by the contrast between the poor little beggar, condemned to penury and the gutter through no fault of his own, and the luxury around us. What a triumph to have shaken off all his early shackles by sheer ability and strength of will, to have risen unaided to become a power in the land.

Among those who strolled over for coffee after lunch were Lord Dalziel, a genial cynic with a fund of good

stories; Solly Joel, an excellent listener, and far more human than his looks; Ernest Terah Hooley, a conversational bully, who could converse about little else than finance; and Arthur Newton, the Bow Street solicitor, who was fond of airing his wonderful French. Newton and Hooley were afterwards imprisoned together.

When he was first elected a Member of Parliament, Bottomley was looked upon somewhat askance. As Lord Goulding said to me, "If a hundredth part of the things attributed to him were true, he would not be fit to be tolerated for a moment in any civilized society." But he was so unassuming, so genial, so amusing and so utterly impervious to snubs that scarcely anyone could succeed in giving him the cold shoulder. Walking through the lobbies with him I noticed how he stopped all the members he met with some quip or friendly remark, which they could not ignore without actual rudeness, and every time a member answered him he would turn to me and say, "See how I am getting on. Very soon I am sure I shall know everybody."

From the outset he contrived to speak with precisely that parliamentary manner, full of common sense and without any approach to sentiment or gush, which secures the ear of the House. The result was that no sooner was it known that he was "up" than the House filled and listened attentively. He also added to his reputation by questioning ministers indefatigably on topics about which most people were uninformed. This suited my book admirably, as he was always ready to raise points about foreign affairs, to which I desired to draw attention. For instance, I kept the public well posted through him about the Servian regicides and the folly of our government in consenting to renew relations with their country. The drawback was that he knew scarcely any-



thing about the subjects except what I told him, so that it was impossible for him to put supplementary questions to a shifty minister, or to answer other members plausibly when they tackled him in the smoking-room.

Moreover I found he was unwilling to do anything which did not bring him into the limelight. For instance, he always refused to communicate privately with the Foreign Office about important matters which could not be put on the notice paper. He was, however, quite frank about it all, and confessed that he cared more for notoriety than he did for Montenegro. However, when Serbia plunged us into war, he remembered my instructions sufficiently to issue a vehement article and to placard the country with posters announcing:

### TO HELL WITH SERVIA!

Much later on, when Serbia had become the pet of the British public, he sat next to Lord Birkenhead at a public dinner, and was mischievously asked, "What about that Servian poster of yours? I expect you're sorry by this time that you sent them out."

"Why on earth should I be?" he returned suavely. "Wasn't I quite right? *Hasn't she been there?*"

I think it was Birkenhead also who teased him about his John Bull League, with which he attracted a great deal of attention, holding crowded meetings at the Albert Hall. "What on earth is this John Bull League of yours?" was the contemptuous question.

"The John Bull League," he answered, with all the airs and graces of a minister replying from the Treasury Bench, "is a voluntary association of unpaid workers for promoting the circulation of a newspaper called *John Bull*."

Walking with him down Pall Mall one autumn day I remarked upon the premature chilliness of the weather and said, "I suppose we shall have to be getting our fur coats out soon."

"Yes," he replied instantly, "if we haven't sold the tickets."

He was one of the few people who troubled to visit Hooley in jail. Once, when he came back, I asked him whether he did not dread a similar fate.

"Not at all," he answered cheerfully. "If people only knew, prison is the finest rest-cure going. You have regular hours, healthy occupation, free medical attendance, no worries and a well-regulated diet. It is far better than any nursing-home, for you can't interfere with the cure by giving way to your whims and fancies. You have just got to do what is best for you. Upon my word, if it weren't for my political ambitions and my newspapers and all my financial schemes, I should ask nothing better than to be sent to jail for twelve months or so. I tried to cheer Hooley up by telling him this, but he hasn't any philosophical spirit."

Doctor Johnson used to say that "the dead cannot pay for praise," and I suppose the same thing applies to people undergoing sentences of penal servitude. But I must protest against one charge which is now often brought against him—that he never did good by stealth. Indeed, I owe one of my most valued friendships to his secret generosity.

There was a certain Labor member whose health had broken down and whose doctors insisted upon a long sea journey which was quite outside his means. So Bottomley got up a subscription on his behalf and headed the list with a handsome donation. Not content with this, he added the names of all sorts of people without consulting

them and paid the various sums out of his own pocket. It was only much later that I heard that I had been credited with generosity to the extent of ten or twenty guineas towards a man who was almost an absolute stranger to me.

The result was that when the Labor man came back with his health restored there was scarcely anything he was not prepared to do for me to show his gratitude. One thing he did do was to take me with him to Tower Hill when he had to address an anxious meeting of strikers. Unless money was immediately forthcoming for the strike fund their fight against capital would have to be abandoned. Imagine the delight when he stood on a wall and announced that there was no further cause for worry, that ample funds had already been provided. The enthusiasm was boundless. I thought the cheering would never come to an end. But on the way home this Labor leader told me with a laugh that he would certainly have been lynched if the crowd had known the fact that not a penny had yet been collected. At the moment I thought his action exceedingly wicked, but on reflection I desecrated a certain amount of wisdom as well as boldness in this course, for the result was that money poured in and the situation was saved for the strikers.

I hold no brief either for or against Bottomley. We had parted company before the war and I saw him only once or twice after my return. Nor am I sufficiently versed in the law to be able to pronounce upon his guilt or innocence. All I know is that I received considerable kindness at his hands and still cherish many pleasant memories of his genial company.

If he did commit serious breaches of the law the explanation is that he regarded himself, as Napoleon and other famous characters have done, in the light of a privileged

person, whose vast schemes for the welfare of humanity entitle them to place themselves on a pedestal above the conventions which restrict small fry. After all, if only he had succeeded he might have been entitled to far higher honors than those which are awarded to happy-go-lucky statesmen and shrewd profiteers whose delinquencies have not yet been found out. In any case, no decent man can view with anything but contempt the attitude which has been taken by former recipients of his benevolence now posing as stern moralists and sitting unctuously in judgment upon him in order to receive handsome rewards for the betrayal of his confidences. It is, at least, a tribute to his character that his present detractors are in no case the persons whom he is supposed to have robbed, but those whom he unfortunately fed and raised from the gutter.

## CHAPTER IX

### JETSAM

I MET Oscar Wilde for the first time at a party in those remote days when he was still received by decent people.

"If I had to make my start again," he said with an air of antiquity, "I should begin life by publishing a volume of reminiscences and call it 'Men I have known,' 'Persons I have met,' or some such title. There is no reason why such things should be the prerogative of the aged, and it would make quite a sensation if a young man had the cheek to attempt it." I did not think much of his titles, but I politely ignored his affectation of age and inquired, "Well, why not try it now?"

"It would be too late now," he said mournfully. "But I commend the idea to you."

Augustine Birrell told me he met Wilde at a party, when the following conversation ensued:

WILDE. "Every situation provides its own repartee."

BIRRELL. "I am not so sure about that. I have just been lunching with a man, and all through the meal he never stopped grumbling about what he called a conspiracy of silence, which had robbed his poems of the fame they deserved. I felt quite embarrassed and hadn't a notion what to say."

WILDE. "But how easy! You should just have slapped him on the back and exclaimed, 'A conspiracy of silence! I will tell you what to do. Join it, my dear sir, join it at once.'"

Wilde told me about one of his little sons, not yet a



lustrum old, who bewildered his family one morning by announcing that he did not mean to say his prayers any more. It was pointed out to him that he must pray God to make him good, but he demurred that he did not want to be made good at all, and did not intend to pray for what he did not want. This provoked a lively altercation, at the end of which the young philosopher, offered a compromise and said he wouldn't mind praying God to make Baby good; which, of course, is human nature all over, as Wilde observed. He had another story about his children playing pranks during their prayers and one of them saying, "Excuse me, Jesus, while I smack Vivian"—or whatever was the name of the youngest.

This reminds me of a little girl called Brookes, who struck prayers in the same determined way, and no persuasion, threats or arguments were of the faintest avail. At last she was told, in what George Meredith used to call "a really-really tone," that she simply must be a good girl and say her prayers, as God would be very angry with her if she did not. But her answer was prompt and triumphant. "Oh! no," she said, "I know he won't; because I've asked him. I said, 'Please, God, will you mind very, very much if I don't say my prayers?' And he said to me so kindly, 'Oh! pray don't mention it, Miss Brookes.'"

I feel a similar reluctance about conducting my readers into Bohemia, though some of its denizens were quite savory. Walter Sickert, for instance, combined a good deal of charm with his eccentric poses. He was naturally eccentric, and he and his clique of painters used to rig themselves out in Latin quarter lines, with huge bows of ribbon outside their coats instead of ties. He used to look quite picturesque, with an enormous flaxen mustache which he suddenly cut off. The first time I saw him with-

out it was at dinner with old Tom Potter, and I was obliged to double myself up with laughter and tell him that I proposed for the future to use his mouth as a letter box. He used to go a good deal to Potter's because Mrs. Sickert was a daughter of Richard Cobden. Never was there such an improbable ménage. She was kindly, highly educated, a suffragette ere ever the Suffragist movement began, otherwise highly conventional.

Another of my Bohemian acquaintances was Charles Horsfall, who painted Kitchener for the National Portrait Gallery. Though he had been quite a successful artist before the war, Horsfall seemed to have fallen under the influence of spirits after his release—not in the alcoholic sense—with the result that he gave up ordinary painting and took to doing extraordinary whorls on huge canvases, closing his eyes and applying his colors by inspiration. He considered himself under the special protection of an ancient Egyptian priest of thousands of years ago, and he used to question this "guide" and obtain answers by raps of his own fingers, one rap for yes and two for no. I suspected that the answers came as he desired them, but this annoyed him, and he certainly succeeded in obtaining remarkable explanations of his pictures by this means. One wild confusion of circles, for instance, was a map of the new Jerusalem.

His connection with Egyptology brought him into relations with Sir Ernest Budge, a famous authority at the British Museum. Budge told him that before he obtained his position he specially dreaded the Assyriology examination. He felt confident about everything else, but that was likely to be a stumbling block and might result in rejection. However, one night he had a vivid dream that he was examined in a little room and that the chief question involved a description of a certain Assyrian portal.

When he woke he said to himself, "If I get that I'm done." So he proceeded to read it up very carefully, and sure enough the examination took place in the little room of his dream, the portal appeared in his examination paper, and he passed triumphantly.

Harry de Windt used to be intimate with the Princess of Monaco and was once invited to the gloomy old palace at the top of the rock. A good deal of etiquette was kept up on German lines. The guests would be assembled in a gilded salon, the doors would be flung open and a gorgeous flunkey bearing a white wand would announce "*Son Altesse Monseigneur le Prince.*" He could never remember de Windt and always muddled his name.

Never was there a more engaging companion. Sometimes a little reckless with his practical jokes perhaps. In 1918, I lunched with him at Windsor when he was commandant of a camp for prisoners of war. We walked over to visit it with a charming lady, whom I had just met for the first time. On the way he said, "I shall have to tell the sergeant something, for I am not supposed to bring visitors."

All through our tour of inspection he was grumbling over the comforts which we were fools enough to allow "these filthy Huns." In one room the prisoners were standing submissively to attention when de Windt fumbled for a handkerchief and brought out a pocket flask which clattered to the floor. One of the prisoners picked it up and handed it back, remarking familiarly, "A leetle drop of schnapps, eh?" The commandant grew very red and called the guard. "Put this man on bread and water for seven days," he commanded. "These outcasts of civilization need strict discipline," he told us airily.

Presently we visited the sergeant in his room and de

Windt introduced us in the most solemn tones without ever moving a muscle:

"This is 'X,' one of the Windsor magistrates, and this,"—pointing to the lady—"is his wife."

It was very difficult to control our mirth though he kept staring at us distrustfully as if waiting to reprimand the first symptom of a smile. When we came out we teased him by exchanging the most passionate endearments. "Darling heart, fancy our being married after all these years." "My own love, I want a new hat. Where are you going to take me for the week-end?"

De Windt had been a great friend of Julius Beerbohm, the brother of the actor. Tears would gather in his eyes as he dwelt on "the sweet fellow's" many charms. "Such a perfect gentleman in everything except in money matters," was his delightful epitaph. The sweet fellow was not goodly to look upon, yellow and upkempt, but he was very good company. He once devoted three hours to me at the Café Europe in Leicester Square, drinking absinthe and trying to persuade me to become a Jesuit. He told me enough stories about the Order to fill many volumes. It appears that part of their training is to make novices fish with long rods for hours and hours in footbaths containing nothing but water. What an epitome of most of our lives!

As for Max Beerbohm, I have always thought him more successful with his brush than with his pen. I was once given one of his books to criticize for the *Saturday Review*, and misliking the style I remarked that I should have preferred this work if it could have been translated from the Yiddish. Instead of being content to suppress my review, the editor showed it to Max, who was naturally incensed. However, I made my peace with him when I met him for the first time at a luncheon party and mistook

him for his nephew. That pleased him as he was already touchy about his senescence. In 1920 I called upon him at his pretty villa near Rapallo and found his sense of humor still well illustrated by a dummy volume in his bookcase, a very slender volume, inscribed "The Complete Works of Guy Boothby."

An Italian, the judge at Capri, told me his experiences of the Italian lottery which I have found even more elusive than roulette. A friend came and showed him many pages of calculations. It appeared that you had to take the numbers for the last drawing in October and work upon them in a particular way with multiplication, addition, and so forth, and they gave the numbers for the first drawing in November—the week including the Day of the Dead. Experiments on previous years showed that it always came right, either with the *quaderna* of the first four numbers, or the *terno* of the second, fourth and fifth. His friend suggested they should put a franc each, but he argued, if it was so certain, he might as well stake much more. So he put on ten francs at the first lottery office on his way back from lunch. Then he reflected he might as well make a fortune, so he staked ten francs more at each of the five lottery offices on his way home. He stood to win 1,800,000 francs on the *quaderna* or 45,000 on the *terno*. On the Saturday afternoon following the draw he was in a coffee house and had forgotten about his gamble when he heard someone talking about the numbers which had been drawn. The second and fourth were numbers of his *terno* but the man could not remember the fifth. Of course, the judge was sure that he had won and he was hardly excited at all when he bought a paper with the full result. Sure enough, the second and fourth numbers were all right, but the fifth was all wrong and he had



lost his 60 francs. Later on, his friend told him he had gone through the calculations again and detected a mistake in one of the additions. Otherwise the fifth number would have been right too. I asked why he did not try another year and he replied that he had lost sight of his friend and forgotten the process.

He also told a tale of baccarat at Rome. A man lost all he had at a club and went out with suicidal intentions. He found a penny in the street and returned to the club. He said to a friend, "I have a lucky penny, let me put it with your stake." "All right." They won ten times running and his penny had become 102 francs, 40 c. He then took a hundred franc bank on his own and made 50,000 francs before the night was over.

The judge was quite elated one day at finding a one pound note in his dinner jacket, which he had been cleaning. This moved him to a reminiscence: "When I was quite a young man and had just passed my examinations for the law my father sent me a good round sum of money which I promptly lost at baccarat. However, he was away from home and he had left me in charge of his office where I found 6,000 francs in the safe. This I took with me, as I had to go to Genoa on business. When the business was done I reflected that Monte Carlo was not far off, so I went over there. I knew nothing of roulette, but I began by staking 100 francs on Pair. I won three times and had 800 francs. Then I put 500 francs on Impair and won. I put 1,000 francs on Manque. Then I reflected that I was so sure to win, I might as well put more. I added 500, then 400 francs and No. 14 came up, giving me a win of 1,000 francs. It seemed impossible for me to lose and soon all the players stopped to watch my luck. I was so much excited that I kept stuffing my winnings into all the pockets

I had. When I returned to the Hotel de Paris I found that I had won over 25,000 francs. So I had a royal time for several weeks with a young lady I met at a dancing place. It was nothing to me to spend a thousand francs in a day. Then I returned home with some money left, but I played baccarat one evening and lost every penny I had. The result was that I had not enough to buy a meal with, no, not even a cigarette. I was in despair, for I did not know what to do. I could not write to my father as he had left 6,000 francs in the safe, besides giving me a good sum for myself. Then a lady came in about some affair and left a deposit of 6,000 francs which I put into the safe. After a great deal of hesitation I borrowed 500 francs of this and went to the club. I came back again and again, taking 500 francs more each time until there was nothing left. I don't know how I passed the rest of the night or the following day. I thought of suicide, for the 6,000 francs would have to be produced almost immediately or I should be sent to prison for 6 years. I had nothing to distract my thoughts, so I got out some of my clothes and began to clean them."

This seemed to be his favorite pastime.

"As I was brushing a pair of trousers, I noticed a crackling sound under one of the front brace buttons, and I found a hundred franc note in a small pocket there. It was not much in view of my desperate situation, but I took it as a good omen. I dressed and went to the club, but there was a very big game on and I had no chance of playing my hundred francs. At last, very late, a heavy banker was going away after winning all the evening and I chaffed him about his not giving me a chance of winning anything. 'All right,' he said; 'I'll stay while you take a bank. How much will you put up?'

'One hundred francs.' There was a roar of laughter all round and he said, 'Be quick about it then. I'll go banco and put you out of your misery at once.' I turned up nine three times in succession and now possessed 800 francs. Then I passed and he said he was determined to have my original hundred francs. He would take a bank of eight hundred francs if I would go banco. The sweat was streaming over my forehead. I did not want to risk all at one go, but I knew that if I refused he would go away and there would be no more play that night. So I accepted and won. He renewed his bank and I won 800 francs more. Then the game stopped; I had won 7,600 francs. I was saved. What things one does when one is very young! Now I am *rangé*, and should no more dream of doing such a thing than of flinging myself into the sea."

While I was at Capri in 1916 I had an interesting meeting with Count Luca Cortese, who for a while supplanted the war in interest throughout Italy by his sudden prosecution, after an astounding career as a modern Montecristo.

One of the many stories told how an actress at Salsomaggiore refusing all the jewels which he laid at her feet, said, "You may buy me a hat if you like." He at once sent secretaries to buy up all the local millinery and she found five hundred hats in her room when she retired to rest.

Even now I do not know the true story of Luca Cortese. He called himself a count and a professor but it appeared that he was neither. So far as I could see with my limited knowledge of finance his banking operations were conducted quite honestly. The courts, however, decided otherwise and he was suddenly sentenced to a long term of penal servitude. There were

even rumors that the Pope was implicated in some mysterious way and had thought it wise to contribute a large sum towards making up Cortese's defalcations. Some people said that he would never have been prosecuted if he had not attracted so much attention to himself by his osentatious mode of living. He used to go about with an enormous retinue consisting of secretaries drawn from the impoverished nobility, a bevy of actresses, and all sorts of nondescript persons; when he arrived at a place, even though it were only for a weekend, he would engage the greater part of a hotel and send for the most famous entertainers, from distances of hundreds of miles at enormous expense to help him to pass an evening with his friends. During his trial the most fantastic tales were published about his freaks of generosity and it was said that he kept a whole staff to deal with applications for his largesse. When I wrote to sympathize with Prince Ruffo about Cortese's catastrophe, Prince, his chief henchman, replied, "For having done too much good to other people, he has done a great deal of ill to himself; that is all."

The last report of him came during one of the many revolts which occur in Italian prisons. The convicts had suddenly possessed themselves of the building after overpowering their jailers. They unlocked all the doors and most of the inmates cleared out, but Cortese remained calmly seated on his wooden stool, apparently uninterested in the proceedings, until soldiers returned and reëstablished order.

One of the oddest characters at the end of last century was a financial meteor called Colonel North. What he seemed proudest of, after his intimacy with Edward VII., was his title of Colonel, though no one knew precisely whence it came, or associated military exploits

with him. For a time he was almost as famous as Hooley, who, it will be remembered, presented St. Paul's cathedral with gold plate and was not surprised when he attended a service there and found the congregation chaunting, "Hooley! Hooley! Hooley!"

North was so much talked about that I determined to make his acquaintance. The difficulty was that he never answered anybody's letters. However, I called at his office in Gracechurch street, and gathered from unsympathetic clerks that he was by no means easy of access. Everybody spoke of "the Colonel" with bated breath. I was told, as though this were a supreme favor, that my card had been sent in to "the Colonel," and finally after long waiting on an outside bench I was ushered, with infinite condescension, into a little den marked "Waiting-room," and informed that "the Colonel"—were there then no other colonels?—would see me presently. I had plenty of time to make myself acquainted with the contents of the waiting-room before this promise was realized. The walls were decorated mainly with illustrated diagrams proclaiming the beneficence of nitrates. There was a drawing of a beetroot and another of some indian corn, both in a stunted condition when they had had no nitrogen, fairly flourishing when they had enjoyed a little, and of phenomenal luxuriance when they had partaken of much. Underneath was the legend that Colonel North's nitrates contained 15 per cent of nitrogen.

I had already seen as much as I wanted of these diagrams when the door opened and North stood before me. My first impression of him was that he was a study in yellow. His hair was ginger-yellow, his face was russet-yellow, his eyes were a kind of sunrise-yellow; his clothes, his boots, even his tie seemed yellow, though, perhaps



the latter was only a case of reflection. He stood a little while watching me with a curious twinkle in his yellow eyes. Then he held out his hand silently and presently burst into a hearty guffaw.

"Well, so you want to hear about this here election, do you?" he began with boisterous joviality. "I don't know that there's much more to tell. You saw what they said in the papers, didn't you?"

Then I remembered that he had just been standing for parliament. So I played up to his mood and observed, "You had a pretty lively time of it, I suppose?"

"By George! yes. I did what I could to make things hum a bit. It was a good, square fight, and seeing he—this Gladstone chap, you know" (meaning Herbert Gladstone, now Lord Gladstone) "had been at it there for fifteen years, and I was only given a fortnight to turn him out in, it wasn't so bad, eh?"

"Are you going to give them a turn there again later on?"

"Ah; that I can't promise. You see I am a very busy man, and, upon my word, I don't much want to get into parliament. Why should I? Anyway, if I do stand, it won't be anywhere else, for I come from that part and we take a pride in each other, them and me."

"Then they treated you pretty well, on the whole? You weren't besieged in your hotel, like that man in Norfolk."

"Bless you, no! We were the best friends in the world. Everything went on swimmingly. It was dry work I can tell you; but I rather liked doing it. The only thing that annoyed them down there was that I had to go away for two days of my campaign. I had an invite from the Prince of Wales to go to Sandringham, so, of course, I couldn't help myself. But they

didn't like it a bit. I shouldn't wonder but what I should have got in if it hadn't have been for that. Then there was Mr. Gladstone. He wouldn't be introduced to me at first; but after a week or so I got a message that he had thought better of it and would like to be introduced to me. So, of course, I was very pleased. I didn't bear any malice, I never do. And then the women there! I can tell you this much, if there'd been women's suffrage Gladstone wouldn't have had a look in—I should have beaten him into a cocked hat. The women and the children were all on my side."

"Then you are in favor of childhood suffrage?"

"Oh! for heaven's sake, don't ask me what I am in favor of! I have had enough of that business to last me for a lifetime. I told them I didn't set up to know about politics. What Salisbury proposed was good enough for me. But I said I meant to look after their local interests. And so I should have, better than anybody else could."

"Then, on the whole, you are pleased with your campaign?"

"Yes, there was nothing to grumble about. They're decent chaps down there, and if they want me again, I shall be there."

I remember a long talk with Escoffier, the famous *chef* at the Carlton, who told me a good deal about his various creations. The name Jeannette, now commonly applied to all sorts of frozen dishes, was devised by him at the time when a French ship of that name was imbedded in the ice of the Polar regions. His chief comment upon English people as gastronomers was, "I never understand why they always help themselves to salt before tasting a dish. It is my business as a cook to add the right amount of condiments. It is, of course, pos-

sible that I may make a mistake and add too little. In that case I cannot complain if people want more, but I do think it is unfair of them to assume that I have done wrong before they have any evidence against me."

Once I wrote asking him for a new idea in the way of a Christmas pudding, to which he replied, "*Je ne sais vraiment pas ce que l'on pourrait créer de nouveau pour remplacer le traditionnel pudding de Noël; je suppose que personne n'osera l'entreprendre, car bien certainement il s'attirerait les foudres de tous vos bons conservateurs. Si toutefois j'ai quelque chose de nouveau à vous communiquer je le ferai avec grande plaisir, mais je ne toucherai pas au pudding car je vous avoue que je suis partisan moi-même des vieilles traditions.*" (I really do not know what one could create in the way of a novelty to replace the traditional Christmas pudding; I do not believe anyone will dare to undertake that, for he would certainly attract the thunderbolts of all your good conservatives. If I have anything new to communicate to you at any time, I will send it with great pleasure, but I will not touch the pudding, for I confess to you that I am myself an adherent of old tradition.)

Frederick Walton, who at one time I saw much of, invented linoleum, lincrusta and other useful eyesores. They were begotten somewhat in this way. He was watching a screw loose in a machine when he noticed that it made a pattern on the roll of material. Now Walton was far from having a screw loose himself, so he had a happy thought, like Newton in his orchard. He devised a machine for making patterns at will, with the result that he had ample leisure to gratify his fondness for art. He bought many expensive pictures, and painted excellent ones himself. Once he wanted to sell some of his surplus treasures and sent for a dealer to inspect them

at his Brighton house. They were all pooh-poohed save one.

DEALER: "Now that is a real gem. Very fine indeed. Who is that by?"

WALTON: (bashfully) "I did that myself."

The stupid dealer was much annoyed, whereas for once he had shown real acumen. I told Walton he should have lured the man on to price it.

Once upon a time Walton stayed with an old lady who went in mortal fear of burglars. Her precaution was to lay the dinner-service on the stairs when she went to bed. One night he started to grope his way down in pitch darkness to fetch a glass from the dining-room. On the top stair he placed his right foot in a soup-plate. Was he dreaming or had he found a moving staircase before it was invented? He advanced with prodigious care and his left foot entered a tureen. Then crash, clatter, whizz, bang! and the unfortunate inventor found himself, terribly travel-stained, amid an avalanche of broken crockery on the mat.

His hostess had a hobby for proposing to various celebrities, her special favorite being the late Duke of Devonshire. All she said at breakfast after the avalanche was, "I wrote to the Duke and asked him to marry me. Would you believe it, Mr. Walton, the man hasn't even answered. He can't be a gentleman."

One of the most inveterate bar-loafers I ever met was F. C. Philips, the alleged author of "As in a Looking Glass." I say "alleged" because of a very persistent rumor that he did not write the novel which made him famous. Some attributed it to Harold Frederick, others to Brandon Thomas; but there was no convincing explanation of his assumption of another person's authorship, and he was certainly very successful with his many

other novels and stories. Indeed, he must have made a very handsome income, and it was a standing puzzle that he never possessed a halfpenny and was always in fear of creditors. Nobody had any idea where his money went, for he lived very simply in the Temple, where scarcely any of his friends were ever admitted. He lived to a great age, or what seemed like one, and I imagine he was scarcely ever out of a public house except during the hours of their closure.

His chief reputation towards the end of his life—and I fancy he was almost proud of it—lay in avoidance of payment for his liquor; indeed I believe he only treated people on very rare occasions and after prolonged teasing on their part. At one time he had been quite amusing in a ponderous way, and many people were glad to pay for the pleasure of his company, but latterly his stock of stories, chiefly about bygone lawyers, came to be regarded as an infliction, and he would be given a glass of port, like an importunate organ-grinder, in order to be rid of him. Like professional beggars, he came to know all the most likely houses of call where free drinks would be forthcoming, and he would race from one to the other in Fleet Street and its neighborhood with feverish anxiety towards closing time. "Let's go to the Rainbow," I have heard him say to a friend, "we're quite likely to find someone there who's good for a drink."

Genial, kindly, at one time almost gifted, he afforded a theme to moralists when one saw him weary, red and fuddled, with no interest in life beyond wooing drinks, which must long have lost all savor to his palate.

One of my most agreeable Bohemian acquaintances was Louis Cohen, who is best known as the author of "Reminiscences of Kimberley," which created a considerable sensation some years ago. In this book he repeated



stories which had been current in South Africa in the early diamond days, unfortunately mentioning Sir J. B. Robinson, whose refusal of a peerage aroused recent comment. Robinson immediately started a prosecution for libel with the result that Cohen and his publisher, Hannaford Bennett, were made bankrupt. In his evidence, Cohen swore that his stories about Robinson had been written to the best of his belief. For this he was prosecuted for perjury and received three years' penal servitude. I had known Cohen very slightly before this but when I attended the trial I thought he had been badly treated and felt very sorry. In fact, after Cohen had served his sentence he told me that my kind eyes had comforted him greatly during his imprisonment. Horridge, the judge, seemed to me unduly severe, especially when Cohen was giving evidence, and once there was a pathetic little incident, which moved me to a convulsive gasp which may have sounded like a chuckle. Thereupon I heard a loud, harsh voice from the bench, almost in the tones of sentencing somebody to death: "If anyone comes into this court to laugh at the evidence, out of court he goes!" I looked up in all innocence and caught Horridge's unpleasant gaze without the faintest suspicion that he was addressing himself to me. "You, sir," he went on, pointing an accusing finger, "I am talking to you." I looked round at the crowd behind me in the well of the court to see who was the culprit, but I was not to be let off so easily. "You, sir, at the end of the last bench," the inexorable voice went on, "If you cannot control yourself you had better go away."

Cohen told me about his release from prison. He was brought up solemnly to say goodbye to the Governor, who wound up a friendly speech by proposing to keep Cohen's copy of "Reminiscences of Kimberley" as a

souvenir. Cohen did not at all want to part with it but presently he thought of a jest and decided to give way. "Well," he said, "I suppose as I got three years for writing it, it is only fair that the book should be sentenced to penal servitude for life."

At one time Cohen was very intimate with Barney Barnato in South Africa, and they used to frequent bars together. Most people envied Cohen the privilege of the millionaire's society and they were always ready to entertain him out of gratitude for being allowed to be seen about with him. But Cohen found that the acquaintance was a very expensive one. Not only did Barney provide neither amusement nor profit but he expected his companions to provide him with unlimited champagne. So on one occasion when they were alone together at one of the chief saloons of Kimberley, Cohen said, "I'm afraid you'll have to pay for the drinks this time as I've left my purse at home."

"Nonsense," was the reply, "you know I never carry money with me. Settle up now, there's a good boy, and I'll give it you back at the office."

But Cohen persisted in his pretence that he had nothing with him so Barney turned to the barman and said, "You'll have to give us credit as we seem to be both without a bean. However, that'll be all right as you know who I am."

"Not on your life, we don't give no credit here."

Barney was shocked at this outrage and pulled out a check book, grumbling at such unnecessary trouble; but the barman went on to say that he had no authority to take checks and eventually the magnate had to leave his watch in pawn, which annoyed him very much as he never heard the last of the story from his friends.

## CHAPTER X

### SOME FRENCH ACQUAINTANCES

I SPENT the winter of 1894-5 in Paris and made many remarkable acquaintances. The first time I saw Zola he had just brought out "*Lourdes*," and he told me with an odd smile that he thought it far and away the best of his books. Then he added that his favorite book was always his latest born and that he never read their elders a second time. "Once published, they have no further existence for me."

Nor did he pay the faintest attention to critics: "All my life they have barked at my heels, but they leave me perfectly cold. Otherwise I should have had a very miserable existence all these years. And why should I care? Literary criticism simply does not exist in France. Every newspaper is actuated by some passion or prejudice."

He had also a poor opinion of his contemporaries. Except in the case of great masters, among whom he certainly reckoned himself, he considered that a popular French writer wrote himself out, or at any rate exhausted himself, in fifteen years. Wherefore, the Paris publishers were ever anxiously on the lookout for new blood and it was only too easy for a young writer to thrust his immature works upon the market. For one thing the risk was so small. Even if the publisher did not sell a single copy he would barely lose £60. It was not like England with three volume novels at 31/6d. A French novel came out in paper covers and was sold at 2/3d. by

discount booksellers. It was the father of his own publisher, Charpentier, who abolished the library system in France and placed literature directly in the hands of the democracy.

"I do not regret this at all," said Zola. "Under the old system authors were cast, with hands and feet bound, upon the tender mercy of their publishers; who dealt far more hardly with them then, especially if their names had yet to be made. The fact was publishers were necessarily more strict in those days, because their prime consideration was *de ne pas effaroucher les familles* (not to scare families), for whom they principally catered. It was a matter of the utmost moment to study the point of view of the *jeune fille*, but now if 'that tedious personage' must not read a book, *Eh bien! la jeune fille ne l'achète pas* (well, the young girl doesn't buy it). . . . no doubt, in her proper place she displayed many amiable qualities, but in the domain of letters her influence was all directed to the obstruction of audacity."

I asked him what he considered the moral effect of his books.

"I never think of that at all," he replied, with his thin, acid laugh. "My only interest is concerned with the fact that I sell hundreds of thousands of copies of everything I write and I receive hundreds of thousands of francs."

I found him very ready to talk about his methods. He told me he recognized three sources of material: the ocular, the oral, and the printed. He began with the last and read every word he could find on the subject he had in hand. For instance, when I saw him he was engaged on the novel called "Rome," and he had already begun to read up his modern Rome, so that, as he phrased it, he might not go there "*en bon enfant*" (as an innocent—literally a good child). After preliminary study the

next step was to rush down to the headquarters of his subject—whether it were Lourdes or Rome or a railway or an universal provider—and spend at least a fortnight, or at most three weeks, in seeing and hearing all there was to be seen and heard. If he stayed longer he imagined he would lose the vividness of his impressions without gaining a compensating value of information. Indeed, with him the materials always overflowed, his difficulty was reticence rather than expansion. This became obvious after, however, few minutes' converse with Zola. He overwhelmed me with a deluge of words, all graphic, apt, persuasive, and some of them convincing. To borrow a French expression, he had his tongue well-hung; and, had he chosen to dictate, the world would scarce have sufficed to hold all the books which he might have written.

As to plots, he told me quite frankly that he regarded them as secondary or even an ultimate consideration. When gathering his materials, when annotating his authorities, when welding his subject into shape, he concerned himself with his plot not at all. It was only when he had selected a variety of types that he encouraged them gradually to develop themselves into characters and form for him a rudimentary story, which might or might not serve to wash down the various scientific and literary studies which it was his ambition to present. I remember a phrase he used on another occasion: "I have finished my new book; I have only got to write it." The writing was done at a great pace, but only for a definite number of hours every day. When the clock struck he would put away his papers even though he were in the middle of a sentence.

In appearance Zola always reminded me of Edward Bowen, with his pale face, pale lips, dry breath and straggling brown beard. But what a contrast in character!



The Hebrew magnificence of Zola's house, overcrowded with old furniture, old masters, every sort of nicknack, reminded me of a pawnbroker's shop or an auction-room. Then his regard for outward appearances! The first time I visited him I was in an old tweed suit. He scarcely rose and he left me to open his study door for myself when I went away. Another time, when I wore a silk hat and frock coat, he escorted me not only to the door of his flat, but right down a flight of stairs to the street, where he stood bare-headed watching my departure. The longer I knew him and the more I read his books the more was I convinced of his utter lack of imagination.

Alexandre Dumas  *fils* , on the other hand, probably the most imaginative writer in France, told me quite seriously that the most distressing obstacle to his labors was the utter sterility of his imagination. When I remarked that this was too much to expect from the politeness of my credulity, he made me a deep bow and said, "*Non, non, je vous assure. J'ai la conception très difficile, très peu d'invention; aucune imagination*" (No, no, I assure you. My conception comes with great difficulty, I have no powers of invention, no imagination). It was only by dint of sheer hard work that he was able to make up at all for this deficiency. And the worst of it was that he hated work. He was supremely lazy and if he had not taken himself roundly to task and forced his inclinations he would never have accomplished a stroke. His only chance was to begin very early in the morning before distractions offered themselves. It was rather the manual execution of his works than the work itself which disconcerted him. If he could have dictated to a typist it might not have been so bad, but that would have broken the subtle connection existing between the brain and the pen; half the battle was to see the words as he wrote

them, for each word had a physiogomy of its own. Very light novels might perhaps be dictated, but then the tendency to diffuseness would be dangerous, and an enormous amount of condensing would have to follow. Anything so subtle as a play could never be dictated.

One effect of his laziness was to make him work very fast, complete a task and feel that he had earned a rest. "*La Dame aux Camélias*" had taken him only eight days in all, "*Les Idées de Madame Aubray*" twenty days, and "*Monsieur Alfonse*" seventeen days. "*Le Demi-Monde*" took eleven months, but that was owing to a mistake about the heroine's marriage in the first act. This necessitated doing the whole work over again. He discovered his mistake only when, after writing and correcting the piece himself, he read it again in someone else's handwriting. To his thinking that was one of the essentials of composition. So soon as he had corrected his work he sent it off to be copied out by someone else, and when it came back to him he could judge of it much better—almost from an outside point of view. When he read "*Le Demi-Monde*" in this way, he exclaimed, "What stupid stuff!" And saw at once that it would never do as it stood. As for his defective imagination, he said he atoned for it to a certain extent by making his characters out of real people. But this, he hastened to assure me, he always did in such a way that each of his victims recognized his neighbor, never himself.

When I asked him for his autograph, he wrote: "*Pardonne à l'avance à tout le monde, pour plus de sûreté; ne méprise pas les hommes, ne les hais pas davantage et ne ris pas d'eux outre mesure, plains-les.*" (Forgive everybody beforehand for greater safety; Do not despise men, still less hate them and do not laugh at them more than you need. Pity them.)

He told me a story about Emil Augier, a brother dramatist, who was far more sensitive about the verdict of the public. During a performance of one of Augier's plays, Dumas espied a man fast asleep in the front row of stalls. This was too good a joke to be lost, so he dragged the unfortunate author into the wings and pointed out the culprit, remarking, "*C'est une opinion comme une autre*" (Slumber is an opinion like any other). Augier was deeply mortified, but imagine his joy when he was able to turn the tables next week. It was at the same theater and here again was a man fast asleep in the first row of stalls, but this time the play was by Dumas. What an opportunity for paying off old scores! But Dumas never turned a hair when he beheld the sleeper. "Oh! that," he answered carelessly, "that's the fellow who slept all through your play and he has not waked up yet!"

Someone said of Dumas, senior, that he was a great, big, overgrown child, whom Dumas, junior, had had when he was very young. But the latter seemed to me to have continued the family tradition by a continuation of perpetual childhood. The first time I saw him, his gait, his jollity, an indescribable personality suggested a giant in Eton jackets. Every moment I was expecting him to put his hands in his pockets and whistle. The magnificence of his apartment, the fragility of the furniture, the pretty little ornaments all jarred on one's sense of fitness and provoked qualms for their fate if ever the big baby suffered from high spirits. And yet there was something paternal about the grip of his huge hand, something in his big oxlike eyes which inspired a visitor with friendliness. Bigness and good humor, those seemed to me the predominant characteristics. He was bubbling over with quiet fun all the time, and, as if nature had not already cast him on a large enough scale, he wore his clothes a

size or so too large for him, hanging anyhow in unsightly wrinkles.

I do not suppose François Coppée is still remembered very distinctly, but in 1894 he was probably a good second to Zola as a literary lion in France. I certainly found him far more interesting in his unpretentious ground-floor flat, than the sumptuous realist with all his mulberry magnificence. I asked him whether he followed Zola's plan of accumulating a vast collection of notes before setting to work, but he said he had never taken a note in his life.

"I trust entirely to my memory," he said. "Nobody ever does invent anything or ever has invented anything in literature. Imagination is simply a compound of memory and comparison. As for Zola, he proceeds on scientific principles and he produces work which I, among others, greatly respect and admire. But mine is the realm of fancy and sentiment, and I am constantly obtruding my own ideas and my own personality among my readers. Now you might read every one of Zola's works twenty times over without gathering from them an inkling of the personality of Zola himself. When I say that I never take a note I do not, of course, mean that I sit down and write a long piece of any sort straight off. Of course, I plan it in my mind and think it out more or less beforehand, and the work has to ripen in my brain for some time before it begins to see the light. In fact, literary productions are in many respects like other productions of nature and certainly not a wit less troublesome."

Something led us on to the subject of Jacobites and he urged me to read a play of his which dealt with the campaign of Prince Charles Edward. "It was a wonderful episode," he said, "that Jacobite rising—one that appeals

to my emotions. It is not the kind of episode that could occur in the present day."

"And yet the Carlist movement in Spain resembled it."

"Yes, but the Carlist movement is not in the same sense a national movement. All the Basques are Carlist and they are ready to fight wherever and whenever you like, but they are only a minority in Spain. Now at the time of Prince Charles Edward you had nearly the whole of Scotland and a large part of England utterly intolerant of the yoke of the House of Hanover, and the coup was within an ace of succeeding. What I like about Prince Charles Edward is that he died a drunkard (*pochard*); no one would have the courage to do that nowadays. Upon my word, I think that was almost the most delightful part about him. People used to let themselves go in those days in a way they never would now."

"And do you never lament the gayety of the old times?"

"I never lament anything. In fact, to tell you the truth, I am afraid I scarcely respect anything, unless it be Death. Death is the only thing that matters; it is perhaps also one of the few guests who are always welcome."

After that there was nothing for it but to take my leave as fast as I could.

Having been long saturated with Whistler's theories of art I thought it might be refreshing to call on William Bouguereau, his veritable antithesis, a kindly, fossilized old bourgeois painter, who had made a fine fortune by photographic sketches of cherubs. I asked him point blank what he thought of impressionism. His answer was, "If a picture is introduced to the public when it is still a mere sketch, it may be a very good sketch, and if so all the better; but it is still only a sketch, and cannot claim to be judged as if it were already a picture. For



my part, I recognize nothing but what is the fruit of solid hard work and patient research."

In his opinion, evidently, no work of art could be complete unless it was complete to the last gaiter-button. Nothing must be left to the imagination. He believed in giving the public what it wanted, and the public had no imagination.

He showed me the first two pictures he had ever painted. One represented a dying man, flat on his back in a desert, and the Angel of Death approaching in a long funereal cloak, to creep right over him and possess him. The other was still more horrible. It depicted Dante and his companions exploring Hell, and witnessing one individual gnawing the throat of another.

"If I had stuck to such subjects as that," he chuckled, "I should have starved long ago. You see, people will only buy pictures which they can put on their walls and take a pleasure in looking at. I am, above all things, a man of methods. I know beforehand exactly what I am going to do; and although, like everybody else, I must needs pay my tribute to indecision, I generally succeed in carrying out my intentions. Here is a picture, for instance, where the composition has not changed one jot since the moment when I started. My only difficulty has been a fear of making the drapery too much alike on the two sides of the figures. Very likely that seems nothing at all to you, but to me it is quite a serious matter."

Walter Sickert summed up Bouguereau's works as, "wooden studio-crockery!" but certainly some of his studies of children would have done credit to almost any chocolate box.

French painters take themselves seriously enough, but oh! the awful importance of French actors, and especially French actresses. I have often wondered whether

Madame Judic would ever have ranked as an actress outside of France. To my mind she was even more monotonous than that everlasting chrysanthemum, Sarah Bernhardt. Almost the only thing she was anxious to tell me about was that an Emperor of Russia and Edward VII. had been in her dressing-room several times, and that she had been presented to Prince George of Greece and Queen Amelia of Portugal.

She also impressed me with the monotony of her existence: "I get up at nine or ten. I have my breakfast at twelve. In the afternoon I take a walk with my dogs, if it is fine; otherwise I read, play cards, do embroidery—*que voulez-vous?* At eight I start by train for the theater and am home by half-past twelve. There is a regular life for you, is it not? I tried bicycling once and broke my foot. It was ages before I recovered and I am not going to try again. Do you know, I adore dogs! I really believe I have ten dogs now. And the first favorite is a poodle called Clown. Then I adore hens too. I think I adore hens even more than I do dogs. . . ."

I went to see Mme. Bartet chiefly because Admiral Maxse had told me she was the greatest actress ever known, and certainly her opinion of herself was not a little lower than the Admiral's. When I ventured to call on her I had the utmost difficulty in persuading her menials to admit me. After waiting a long time in her old-gold drawing-room in a periwig atmosphere, I woke up to the entrance of a very great lady who held herself erect, bowed stiffly and murmured the one word "Monsieur," as she waved me punctiliously to a chair.

"I am," she said, in the course of conversation, "like those happy countries of which it is related that they have no history. I am entirely wrapped up in my professional life; I study my parts, I act them to the best of

my small ability, I eat, I sleep, I meet my friends, I chatter, I enjoy the air and the birds and the sunshine, and then I begin all over again. Nothing ever happens to me, and were it not that I have a very equable temperament I should probably find life most terribly monotonous. As it is, I have nothing to complain of, except that the days pass so fast that there is no time to count them."

I told her how I had taken part in some private theatricals in an English country house long ago; how the walls of the little theater were decorated with the names of the most celebrated dramatic artists in the world, and how foremost and most conspicuous among them was the name of Bartet. She did not seem much interested, giving me a slight indulgent smile, as though to inform me that she did not care for empty compliments. However, no sooner did I mention the name of Maxse than her face lit up and she immediately changed not only her manner but also her whole appearance.

She was soon confiding to me her experience of stage fright. "I am nervous all the time," she exclaimed. "Of course, it is ever so much worse before I know how a piece will succeed. I do not mean that I am greatly affected by the attitude of the audience, though of course, I like to be appreciated. But until a play has actually been put upon the boards and confronted with a full house, it is impossible to be certain of its merits or of its suitability to the various interpreters. To do justice to my work it is always necessary to lose myself in the personality I have put on for the moment, to feel as she feels, to think as she thinks, and to conduct myself appropriately in every detail, however apparently trivial. Thus I become for the moment the person herself, and forget myself as a private individual, and gradually lose my own tricks of character and instinctively adopt those which

are required by my part. Directly I step upon the stage I am no longer Bartet; I am Denise, or Francillon, or Berenice, or Diane de Lys, or whoever it may be."

I made the commonplace remark that it must be less inspiring to play with an uncongenial actor than with a sympathetic one, and that it must be rather dreadful to make love, even in pretence, to someone you cordially detest. Mme. Bartet looked rather pensive for a moment and then began to laugh.

"Oddly enough," she said, "that very same observation was made to me by your compatriot, Mrs. Asquith, when I was in London. She said that, for her part, it would be impossible for her to simulate a faint spark of affection for an uncongenial person, even if all her career depended upon it. But, in the first place, I do not think I detest anybody. I have always got on very well with my fellow-artists. Secondly, what is more to the point, though some people might think it discourteous in me to say so, I never really think very much about the persons I am acting with, any more than I do about the audience. If they have any effect upon me it is an unconscious one, and I strive all the time to concentrate my attention upon my own part in order that I may make the best of it."

I saw a good deal of Yvette Guilbert, wonderfully plain and wonderfully agreeable, with little quaint turns of phrase and a way of expressing a hundred thoughts in half a dozen words—quite as effective in private life as on the stage. She had acquired wonderful English in a very short time, but could not always catch idiomatic phrases very quickly. For instance, she talked much about the delightful childishness of a song she had heard in London, with the refrain, "Her golden hair was hanging down in a bag." And nothing would persuade her that the right version was "down her back."

I had a long talk with Francis Magnard, the editor of the Paris *Figaro*, just before he died, and he told me some interesting things about the differences between French and English journalism. He complained that they had no advertisements of any account, and no means of distributing their copies by newspaper trains; but he was proud of the social side of his paper, the "feev o' clocks" of the *Figaro*, and the fencing-school for the staff. At this time his paper was supposed to be engaged in a Buonapartist plot, which very nearly came off; and Magnard told me he would certainly have been prosecuted if the government had not been afraid of adding to the plethora of scandals then raging in France. All he would say about the Buonapartists was that if any adversary of the Republic had the ghost of a chance it would be they, but only after a war or a national cataclysm of some sort.

At that time I was trying to obtain permission for Don Carlos to reside in France. He did not wish to make any open request, but I was given to understand that, if an unofficial application was successful, he would be very grateful. The President of the Republic, however, refused to see me except by a recommendation from the British Embassy; and I hesitated about this, for it might have given the game away.

When I mentioned Don Carlos and his partisans to Magnard, he gazed at me in amazement, like the chief of a secret society to whom the most cryptic password has been idly flung by a casual stranger. I explained lightly that I merely asked because I happened to be a Carlist agent in London. This was rather an exaggeration, but my statement served its purpose and Magnard's face seemed transfigured, beaming upon me with a benevolence of which I had not deemed it capable. "*Ah! Don Carlos!*"



*en violà un roi, par exemple!"* (Ah! Don Carlos! There is indeed a King!) he exclaimed enthusiastically. That is the kind of man of whom France stands in need. He is no cringing, theatrical parvenu pretender. His every action is kingly; his lofty, disdainful attitude is superb. He places his principles, his religion and his royal dignity above everything, and refuses to yield an inch to expediency on any point. Men may call that Quixotism if they like; I call it magnificent. I, for my part, should be proud to be the subject of such a king. But alas! it is not to be. Such sentiments belong to another age. The age of chivalry has long, long passed away."

"It will return," I replied, as I rose to take my leave.

"I see you are young enough to retain your illusions," he said, wringing my hand cordially. I am still in doubt whether his smile was one of pity, or of amazement, or of undiluted benevolence.

Gaston Calmette, Magnard's successor, who was afterwards shot by Mme. Caillaux for alleged blackmail, certainly carried French methods of polite insolence to a remarkable degree. When he greeted me he asked how much of the building I had already seen. I replied that I had only seen M. Magnard. This seemed to annoy him, for some reason or other, and he said somewhat curtly that he was well aware that M. Magnard had received me. When I was taken to the fencing-saloon I remarked amiably that I supposed fencing was one of the most necessary accomplishments of a French journalist; but he failed to appreciate the pleasantry, and said he supposed that fencing had gone out in England, since modern manners had rendered it unnecessary for Englishmen to defend their honor.

I think Massenet was by far the pleasantest person I met during my stay in France, indeed, one of the few

Frenchmen who maintain the old traditional politeness of his country. When I wrote to him from St. Germain as a perfect stranger to ask for a few minutes of his precious time, I received an express letter informing me that mine had pursued him "from pillar to post and . . . from pocket to pocket!"

"At last," he wrote, "it reached me this morning at this very instant. We are starting this evening, my wife and I, for the seaside and the season does not allow us to put off our departure even for one day. Will you allow me to make an appointment for this evening at half past six at my publisher's? All my devoted sentiments and all my excuses for not coming to St. Germain to see you. Press of time absolutely prevents this, alas! I have only just returned from a journey. We have been making an excursion, my wife and I, for many weeks. Ah! what happy memories I have of the reception accorded me by the English public last June!

"MASSENET.

"Paris, Saturday, 18 August, 1894."

The room at his publisher's office was a dreamy poetical place, suggesting a chapel to Saint Cecilia, with its stained glass window and ornate piano. Here I found the politeness of his conversation almost more overwhelming than that of his correspondence. In anybody else it might have seemed overdone, but I never had any doubt as to its genuineness.

"I never put pen to paper until I have finished an entire work," he told me. "Say an opera takes one or two years to compose. Well, out of that only the last five or six months are devoted to the actual transcribing. It is not that I have a phenomenally good memory for anything else, and I should be somewhat disturbed if someone came and asked me to write down or play any par-

ticular passage. That, however, is mainly due to my extreme reluctance about admitting strangers to the society of my work. I look upon it as my friend, my child, nay, rather as part of myself; and if I had my own way I should compose only for my own private satisfaction, and never allow anything I did to be published or performed. Once a new opera of mine has passed into the hands of the managers and mummers, I feel that an outrage against decency has been committed upon it, that I have lost my best friend and am once more alone upon the earth. I have enjoyed the intimacy of my characters, I have shared all their secrets; and when another has been allowed to gaze upon them, I feel as though I had committed a monstrous breach of confidence, and I am ashamed to look them in the face again. I never go to see one of my works performed, I could not bear it. The first night of "*La Navarraise*" I went and smoked in the street, and only looked in at the end to hear how the thing had gone off. The public had invaded my privacy—*le public était chez moi*—and it was more than I could bear. It is the same kind of sentiment which makes me intolerant of all strangers at rehearsals. It is a wrench to hand over my work to anybody, but I grow accustomed to the interpreters of it by dint of considering them as machines, or, I should rather say, as a keyboard on which I am playing. But if a stranger comes in to watch the charm is broken. However well he may conceal himself I know he is there. Again and again I have stopped a rehearsal and said, 'I am sure there is a stranger present.' They have laughed at me, but I have always turned out to be right; and I have refused to proceed until the stranger withdrew."

"Then you are utterly indifferent to the reception which the public may give to your works."

"Ah! that, no. I am like a father whose child may have gone wrong but who is still anxious for the child's welfare. It is merely that I have not the heart to be present myself at my child's prostitution. When my opera was produced in London I attended all the rehearsals and I was persuaded to come to the theater for the rise of the curtain. Then I walked about in the Strand and came back only for the *sortie*. I will not conceal from you that I went through an infinity of emotions while waiting to know the verdict of the public."

"But how would that be? You know your music is good and you know that the public really knows very little about music."

"I do not agree with that point of view. One individual, or a number of individuals, even, may be ignorant, but the public as a whole very rarely makes a mistake. The public is a wise and impartial body, though it may be largely composed of foolish and insignificant globules. This much I admit, that the public is susceptible of impressions. It may be misled into liking a bad thing, but it must be impressed by a masterpiece. And I think it may be relied upon to reject anything very bad. It is on mediocre performances that the public is least to be trusted, where there is no emphatic verdict to be given one way or the other. It may judge accurately of the highest and lowest types of music—say, 'Parsifal,' and a very, very light opera; for I know no higher and no lower type than those. 'Parsifal' is the very top of the ladder. It is absolutely a miracle. As to light operas, I am very far from saying they are all to be despised. There is your composer, Sullivan, for instance. He has done serious works and won his spurs as a musician; but he does not disdain to write gay music also, and what is more he does it very well. You have no idea how

difficult it is to produce something really good which is at the same time amusing.

"Of course, I do not attempt to lay down the law for other musicians. My method is to compose anywhere and everywhere—in the street, during a conversation, in fact, all the time. I get some of my best inspirations when I am conversing, especially if it is with a fresh and charming person, like yourself. I imagine the greater part of my composition is done whilst I am taking walks. *Solvitur ambulando*. I am told there are some poets also who compose in this way. I have a rooted aversion from sitting down to compose. It is too much like a task, like a matter of business, *une besogne*. Of course, when it comes to writing out, that must necessarily be a task. The whole orchestral score of an opera is an immense manual labor to write out. Are you aware that it contains some 1,800 to 2,000 pages? When I arrive at that stage in my work my great desire is to get it over as soon as I can. I work at least sixteen hours a day at it."

Again and again I found him drifting back to ecstatic appreciation of England. "My visit to your country," he said, "was one long succession of delights. During the productions of '*La Navarraise*' at Covent Garden I had no fault whatever to find. The artists were excellent, the theater was admirable, the realism with which the piece was put upon the stage seemed to me an artistic prodigy. But my most vivid impression of England is centered in Irving. His *mise-en-scène* is probably the most marvelous in the whole world. I do not believe it is possible to surpass it. And the man himself, with those fatigued eyes, which make him look thousands and thousands of years old! *Cet homme inoui* (This incredible man). I had some difficulty in getting a seat, I can tell you. No doubt, they would have found me one if I had



sent in my card; but I have an objection to being—what do you call it?—a deadhead. At last I managed to obtain a stall. How cheap it was! Only half a guinea. I would have paid that very many times over for the privilege of beholding that great man."

This generation has probably forgotten the enormous excitement which was aroused all over the world by the Dreyfus case. If there was any class of people who took absolutely no interest whatever in any event outside their own village I should say that it was the class of Sussex laborer of Victorian days. Yet I remember one occasion when I found three of the most ignorant in tears at a well, and when I asked them what was the matter they told me that they "couldn't bear to think of that poor French captain." Of course, there were a great many ins and outs, both racial and political, about that sensational case, and probably no one will ever know all the facts. During many visits to France I have heard a number of stories about Dreyfus.

It appears that he made no secret of the fact that he had been engaged as a spy in Germany on behalf of the French. On one occasion, he told a friend of mine, he had been walking about in the neighborhood of some German fortifications, and making mental notes of what he saw, when suddenly three policemen jumped out upon him and asked him what he was doing there. He had some plausible answer ready, but their suspicions were aroused by his accent and they insisted on his accompanying them to the police-station. This he would not have minded had he not been carrying three highly compromising letters in his pocket. On arriving at the station the policemen found that the inspector was out and that they must wait for his return. Dreyfus said he supposed he might smoke, and the police said, "Certainly." Then

he offered each a cigar, took one himself, brought out one of the compromising letters from his pocket, slowly twisted it into a spill, lit it at the fire in the most careless way imaginable, gave a light to each of the policemen, kindled his own cigar and flung the rest of the letter into the fire.

There were still two letters to be got rid of and the Inspector was expected every moment. If he were caught it meant at least five years' penal servitude. He had never known such an anxious time. He decided it would be quicker to let his cigar go out rather than to smoke it through and light a fresh one with another letter. But it seemed as though the cigar would not go out, and every instant he thought he heard footsteps outside. At last he got rid of the second letter without exciting suspicion. Then he tossed away his cigar with all possible speed and had just time to light another before the inspector came in and ordered him to be searched. Another quarter of a minute and he would have been undone. As it was he was released with apologies.

On another occasion he aroused the suspicion of a tavernful of people with whom he had been trying to ingratiate himself. One of the company suddenly proposed the toast of "Confusion to France," and everybody watched to see whether he would drink it. He had just before been proclaiming himself "a good German," and he felt sure that if he refused the toast he would be handed over to the police to be searched. He reflected that he would be doing France less harm by drinking her confusion than by losing the documents he had obtained for her, so he drank the toast and escaped. Afterwards, when the French condemned him for treason, this story was raked up against him and he was told that he must have drunk confusion to France quite willingly.

## CHAPTER XI

### DON CARLOS

CHARLES of Bourbon and Este, Duke of Madrid, was born in exile at Laibach in Austria on the thirtieth of March, 1848. He was the son of Don Juan of Bourbon and Braganza, and grandson of that Don Carlos who, in 1833, by an arbitrary and unconstitutional law, was deprived of the Spanish Crown. In 1872 the young Duke of Madrid embarked upon a gallant endeavor to vindicate his rights and restore the liberties of Spain. For four arduous years he led his armies in many sharp battles and maintained his rule throughout the northern provinces of his kingdom. It was a crusade as heroic and more hopeful than that of Bonnie Prince Charlie, and he would doubtless have effected the restoration of his House but for the treacherous interference of foreign statecraft.

On the death of Henry V. (Comte de Chambord) in 1883, the throne of France passed, through the operation of the Salic law, to his nearest male agnate, Juan of Bourbon. Juan died in 1887, and his son Don Carlos then became the lawful King of France and Navarre. Being specially devoted to his Spanish cause he never concerned himself actively with his French rights; but he never abandoned them to the machinations of the House of Orleans, and was always recognized as King by a small and faithful band, known in France as the "*Blancs d'Espagne*." Though he never succeeded in recovering his throne he reigned throughout his long exile over the

hearts of all the loyalists of the world as the champion of justice, the King of the counter-revolution.

The one relief of my gloomy sojourn in Venice was the inestimable honor of making his acquaintance. I used to see him almost every day in the *Plazza San Marco*, or at the *Lido*, with his equerries Count Melgar and General Sacanell, whose chief duty it was to control half-a-dozen dogs of various breeds, all pulling vigorously in different directions. As a Legitimist I naturally bowed to the King, and he came to greet me with a gracious smile on his grave, bearded face.

The next step was to crave an audience; so I wrote to my friends of the Legitimist Jacobite League in London, and they sent me an address of homage and devotion engrossed on vellum for presentation to His Majesty. Meanwhile, I had talked to my acquaintances and suddenly I received an intimation from a young Venetian countess, whom I scarcely knew, that we were both commanded to the Loredan Palace that same afternoon. This puzzled me, but I could not refuse the command even if I would. Afterwards Count Melgar told me that the King had been no less surprised by the visit of the *contessina*, but that, "*on ne pouvait pas mettre une demoiselle a la porte.*" (One could not show a young lady the door.) It appeared that she had written to ask for an audience for me and that it had been granted with no expectation of receiving anybody else.

When I bent to kiss his hand he withdrew it; doubtless, to remind me that he maintained his incognito as Duke of Madrid. But I was not corrected when I called him, "*Sire,*" and "*Votre Majesté*"; and I was expected to stand all the time. There was indeed a slight misunderstanding about this at the outset. He seated himself in a thronelike arm-chair and made a sweeping movement to

bid the *contessina* take a chair beside him. I imagined myself included and took another chair on his left, but when I looked round I noticed that the equerries were all standing. Presently, after serving his Sovereign, Count Melgar brought me coffee and I stood up for him to light my cigarette. Then I committed the solecism of seating myself once more. The King had been talking common-places to the little countess, but now he turned on me with a look of surprise. He was too considerate to embarrass me; so he rose and led me round the room, showing me flags of the Spanish civil war, portraits of Bourbons, and, to my surprise, a big photograph signed "Albert Edward P."

"A great friend," he remarked, adding that no one was likely to disturb Victoria, but that he did not think Edward would enjoy a long reign. There would probably be a revolution and after that the restoration of the Stuart heiress might become possible.

The audience did not last long, but I was invited to lunch a few days later. Beside the King's chair was an enormous macaw of many colors. From time to time it exclaimed "*Poveretto!*" (poor fellow); then the King gave it a sponge-cake finger and it climbed laboriously down to soak its prize in a bowl of water on the floor. The glass and china and gold plates were magnificent, all bearing the royal arms of Spain. But royal meals have their drawbacks. The King was helped first and ate rapidly. As soon as he had finished the footmen snatched our plates away whether we had finished or not. At first, I tried to defend mine, but the footmen were too strong for me.

The conversation was chiefly about people, including English people for my benefit, especially Lord Ashburnham, His Majesty's representative in London. Ashburn-



ham had recently translated an article of mine about Don Carlos for the Carlist organ at Madrid, *El Correo Espanol*. This had led to a correspondence; later on we became friends, and he consulted me about raising a loan for Don Carlos, to be repaid with high interest on his establishing himself at Madrid. Lord Hardwicke and Arthur Baumann tried to help me in the matter, but with no success.

Venice is like a village for gossip. One night my hat fell into a canal after the theater. Next day Horatio Brown heard I had been half-drowned and wrote advising me "not to bathe so early in the year." The most fantastic scandals were always springing up from innocent incidents, and it was natural that the Head of the House of Bourbon should not be spared in a democratic atmosphere. He had been horsewhipped by jealous gondoliers, his palace was a hot-bed of vice, no woman was safe from his advances, and so forth. Such a reputation exposed him to overtures from females of every class; and one of his equerries told me that his post bag was full of romantic assignations and wild declarations, very few of which ever reached his eye. Otherwise, there is no knowing what might have happened, for he was full of chivalrous instincts and could never be rude to a woman.

Count Urbain de Maillé, his representative in Paris, discussed this trait with me one night after dinner, and said, "He has always been like a schoolboy and feels flattered by any woman's smile, but the accusation of immorality is laughable to all who know him."

Ladies have talked much to me of his charm, but even when they were present this seemed to me to consist only in a grave and kindly interest about everybody. He wanted to know all about you, and asked leading questions. I should call him reserved, and his piety was

well known. If he had been at all inclined to kick over the traces, his second wife, Princess Bertha of Rohan, would certainly have been quite capable of exercising restraint.

The marriage was certainly a love-match. Her character was resolute and he delighted to gratify all her whims. I have a number of photographs which he sent me taken with his bride in very affectionate attitudes, holding hands, pressing cheeks and exchanging caresses with the utmost unconcern.

My last audience was the most interesting. Hearing I was about to visit Bulgaria he warned me to be careful what I said there. His friend Comte d'Andigné had been expelled from the country by Prince Ferdinand's orders, because of some indiscreet remarks about the Orleans family in private conversation at the Hotel Bulgaria.

I remarked that I thought it would be rather fun to be expelled from a country.

"I have not found it so," he replied with a melancholy look in his eyes.

When I went to Spain I nearly had an opportunity of testing the question for myself. He had given me introductions to his leading supporters at Madrid and Barcelona, and wherever I went I flaunted his signed photograph on my chimney-piece. This would have been enough to make me a suspect, but it happened that the Carlists were making one of their periodical demonstrations and several of them had been imprisoned on charges of fomenting civil war. I sent reports of their torture in jail to the *Morning Post*. The result was a vehement official denial and a long debate in high circles about giving me notice to quit. In the end Alphonso's good-nature prevailed, for he has always had a tender heart for the British. I received hints, first from my landlord

at Barcelona, then from a policeman at a cock-fight, but it was the gypsies of Granada who finally decided my departure.

After exploring the Alhambra with my wife I emerged on a broad terrace overlooking the lower town. Here the gypsy youths were a greater nuisance than ever. They are always nuisances, but this was the time of the Spanish-American war and people persisted in mistaking me for an American. We were mobbed and jostled and insulted. I happened to carry an iron stick covered with leather and did not make allowance for its weight when I whacked a youth over his cloth cap. He staggered back, howling with fury; and in the twinkling of an eye, every window in the neighborhood was alive with men and women shaking their fists, cursing in the richest vocabulary of Europe. The mob was growing to fearsome proportions and I began to feel like Saint Paul at Ephesus.

There was a long rough path to the lower town and I whispered to my wife, "We had better get out of this."

She started running and I followed with what dignity I could muster. The yells of execration became deafening, but no one seemed to think of pursuit. Presently, however, stones began to fly, pebbles and flints at first, then great rocks and boulders.

"Run for your life," I cried, walking backwards so as to be able to dodge the missiles and convey useful warnings.

Luckily the gypsies were very bad shots and we escaped, my wife with a grazed elbow and myself with a discolored eye. But she was overcome by panic and insisted on instant departure from Spain.

She had heard too many stories of the relentless vendettas of the Rom. A few months previously an Englishman had climbed the Giralda at Seville with a gypsy-

guide. Chancing to look round on his way he saw the man raising a long knife to stab him in the back, so he promptly drew his revolver and shot him dead. The result was that the police were obliged to lock him up to save him from the dead man's friends, and even so the prison had to stand a regular siege for several days. The Englishman was acquitted, having obviously killed in self defense. But for years after, in his Surrey village, he was haunted and threatened by gypsies, like the unfortunate character in the "Moonstone." Evidently it was good policy to curtail our sojourn at Granada.

## CHAPTER XII

### BULGARIA

WHEN I reached Bulgaria one of Prince Ferdinand's first questions was, "What does Monseigneur the Duke of Madrid say about me?"

X. (smiling): "He told me to be careful what I said. The Comte d'Andigné——"

FERDINAND (not smiling): "Ah! The Comte d'Andigné. That is the gentleman who thinks Don Carlos ought to be King of France."

X.: "But surely your Royal Highness is a Legitimist."

FERDINAND: "In reason, yes."

X.: "And believes in restoring everybody—all the Sovereigns of Italy, for instance, the King of Naples, the Duke of Parma, the Grand Duke of Tuscany?"

FERDINAND: "That depends on what you mean by believe. I am not like the Christian Father, who said '*Credo quia impossibile.*' If you believe too much you knock your head against a brick wall, and that may have painful consequences. The most pious opinions get shattered by the logic of facts. You will never put back the clock in Italy or France. I do admit that it was a gross scandal for my family to secure the throne of Portugal."

Then he changed the subject hastily. "What do you think of my Bulgarians?"

"They seem perfectly charming."

Now he really did laugh, screwing up his little pig's eyes and wrinkling his fat face.



"Do you really think so?" he scoffed. "This is not precisely the adjective I should use. Of course, they are the crudest peasants, but they are improving since I came. And they have sterling qualities. They will go far."

I begged him to tell me something about his political schemes but he merely laid his forefinger against the side of his long nose and said constitutionally, "Have you seen my ministers?"

Then he led me into his study and showed me crowds of framed photographs, the chief decoration of the room. Coming to one of Alphonso of Spain, he turned it round, saying playfully, "I must not show you that, since you come from Don Carlos."

The pictures on the walls were mostly of royal personages. He pointed to one of Louis XVI. and said, "I have often been told that it resembles me. What do you think?"

I looked doubtfully from one to the other. "Yes," I said at length.

"In what particular way?"

"*Surtout le nez, monseigneur.*" (Especially the nose, sir.)

Now this was a terrible indiscretion, for I have since learned that if there is one thing he is sensitive about it is his nose. It is an endless nose, which has been the subject of countless caricatures, not to insist upon the song,

*"De ton nez, de ton nez  
Tous les nez sont étonnés"*

(At your nose, at your nose, every nose is echymose).

He flushed up and for a moment I thought he was going to be really angry, especially when I began to laugh.

I hastened to admire a huge bowl of violets on his

table and at once his mood changed. Sunshine broke through the threatened storm.

"Ah! do you love flowers too?"

It was as though I had uttered the pass-word of some mystic freemasonry. Strange being, with his gross face and figure, his long tapering white hands covered with garish rings, the strong scents about his person, the effeminate affectations, the conspicuous intelligence. Reserved about politics, he was quite ready to discourse for ever about the flora of the principality. By the time he dismissed me, he had quite recovered his temper.

"*Vous voyez bien que je partage un peu vos idées*" (You see, I share some of your ideas), he said. And then "*Au revoir.*"

Blech, the British Consul, hesitated to believe that the Prince had said "*Au revoir.*"

Evidently Ferdinand had reflected over my indiscretions and made unfavorable comments. It is true that he invited me to the great Court function on Easter Eve, when he and his mother, Princess Clementine of Orleans, distributed colored eggs adorned with crowns and royal ciphers. But when he saw me in the crowd he turned his back.

There was a great deal of pomp about this childish ceremony. After a midnight service in the cathedral, the chief Bulgars assembled in the big saloon of the palace. Diplomatic representatives were absent because Ferdinand was not yet recognized by the Powers. But there was Stambouloff, known as "the Bismarck of the Balkans," a repulsive little Kalmuck with high cheek-bones, his breast all glittering with decorations like a Christmas-tree. The gorgeous uniforms of the generals would have made the fortune of a comic opera. One could almost imagine a blare of trumpets as Count Bourboulon waved

his white wand and announced: "*Son Altesse Royale, Monseigneur le Prince de Bulgarie. . . . Son Altesse Royale. Madame la Princesse.*"

Their Royal Highnesses did not make the tour of the circle, but mounted two platforms. Great baskets of eggs were brought, and they proceeded to distribute them with much solemnity. As we formed queues and went up to the platforms the atmosphere was quite cathedral. We might have been coming up for Holy Communion.

The Prince condescended to joke at rare intervals. I came up with Bouchier, the *Times* correspondent, then a prime favorite, and Ferdinand laughed at him.

"This is not for you," he teased, pretending to withhold an egg as though it were a cork offered to a kitten. I joined politely in the laughter, but was given my egg with a stony stare. My chief shock at the party was when the time came for refreshments. There were thick sandwiches on priceless Sèvres dishes. I poured a sparkling amber liquid from a golden beaker to a silver goblet, anticipating the most exquisite vintage of Champagne. I raised it to my lips with all the tenderness of a connoisseur. Faugh! It was Bulgarian beer.

Presently I had a more embarrassing ordeal. The Prince had turned his back on me, but Count Bourboulon took me up to be presented to the Princess. A great stateswoman, a diplomatist of many wiles, as became the daughter of that old rascal Louis Philippe, austere and forbidding with her aquiline nose and innumerable wrinkles, she was also as deaf as a post. Now deaf people nearly always make conversation a torture. But imagine yourself isolated in the center of a vast saloon with a crowd of courtiers listening in dead silence to every word, while you were expected to exchange platitudes at the top

of your voice with a King's daughter who looked like a she-dragon.

She extended a metal ear-trumpet, which I mentally christened a shawm, and asked what I thought of the improvement of Sofia, whether I had seen the Prince's Zoo, where I was going next, and other things which did not stimulate conversation. Then she grew as much bored as I and joined the general silence. The trumpet was still extended, but one must not start fresh topics with royalty, and I remained petrified in a nightmare. Worst of all, she made no move to dismiss me. It was only when she caught sight of Bouchier that I was relieved. He was also very deaf, so they got on admirably. There was a long and lively conversation, though neither heard a word.

Presently Ferdinand strolled in and became quite animated with Bouchier and a number of chosen friends. The merriment was at its height when suddenly a great chill came over the scene. *Mene, Mene, tekeli, upharsin.* An ugly face scowled through the doorway, resenting conviviality, breathing hatred and contempt through every pore. If hatred could have killed, we should all have been dead men and women. The Premier was surveying the scene. For many minutes he stood there with folded arms amid a silence that could be felt. At last he turned on his heel and disappeared with a growl.

The Court took some time to recover. Then Ferdinand drawled, "*Monsieur Stambouloff est-il parti?*" (Has M. Stambouloff gone?) And the airy chatter was resumed.

Finally, the Prince delivered a speech in Bulgarian, which he had only recently begun to learn, and I could not help admiring his very royal assurance. When he was at a loss for a word—and this happened pretty often—

he did not hum and haw or look round for a prompter, but simply waited and waited till an inspiration came. The Duke of Devonshire used to yawn during his own speeches, but even that did not show such sublime contempt for an audience.

With all his roguery, it is difficult to withhold a certain admiration from Ferdinand. The upstart was always so very *ancien régime*. His dignity! His courage! I know it is the fashion to make him out a coward, to sneer at his horsemanship, to tell tales of his dread of aeroplanes. But when conspirators were daily plotting to assassinate him, he used to drive about attended only by equerries and useless flunkeys, while Stambouloff never ventured to stir without an escort of clattering cavalry all round his carriages.

At one of my audiences, the Prince said to me serenely: "You would be surprised to hear what a number of plots there are against my life. Every day the police bring me details of scores of them. See that heap of papers on the side-table. Every one of them is a threatening letter or a warning. I know I shall be assassinated one day, but I am sustained by the thought that I am doing my duty."

This was before the time when he is reported to have said, "When there are assassins about, I find it more prudent to be on the side of the assassins."

"Foxy Ferdy!" Well, he has had a good run for his life and has now gone comfortable to earth at Coburg.

At this time the relations between him and his Premier were distinctly strained. Stambouloff could not forget that he had brought Ferdinand to the throne, and he knew all about Ferdinand's intrigues to dismiss him.

One morning, when I was looking out of my window at the Hotel Bulgaria, I saw a historic sight. Stam-



bouloff drove up with his clattering escort and disappeared into the palace, where he remained a very long time. As he returned to his carriage and drove off the Prince and his mother came out on to the broad balcony and engaged in agitated conversation as they watched him go. Through my opera glasses I could watch the twitches of their drawn faces, almost read the words of anguish on their lips. The Prince wrung his hands tragically, the Princess mopped her eyes.

It was only one of the periodical threats of resignation by the Bismarck of the Balkans.

When at last Ferdinand was ready to accept resignation, Stambouloff's fury knew no bounds. He swore the Prince would not remain another month on his throne. But before the month was over the fallen statesman was whining with fear and clamoring for hourly protection day and night by the police. This was refused, and when he was cut to pieces by assassins his party tried to hold the Prince responsible. The Prince, however, had nothing to gain by the disappearance of an extinct volcano, and Stambouloff had so many enemies that I doubt whether any power on earth could have saved him.

It would be euphemistic to call his methods brutal. He used to cast leaders of the opposition, grave and reverend Seignors like Karaveloff, into deep dungeons half full of stagnant water, and condemn them to the society of rats in pitch darkness. When politicians were ill-advised enough to refuse to confess crimes they had never committed it was his playful practice to torture them with boiling oil.

This led to an amusing incident in the case of Chaudourne, a French journalist. Bouchier had accompanied the Prince to Rilo monastery and after a picnic had toasted him as "the inheritor of Constantine" on Turkish

soil. Chadourne reported this to his paper and it led to diplomatic protests. Then one night, as he was leaving the Union Club, he was suddenly seized by policemen, bundled into a cab, and driven off at a great pace to the frontier.

Before his actual expulsion he was taken into a small khan at Tsaribrod as his guards needed refreshment. To his unspeakable horror he heard them calling for oil. Now he knew that his last hour had come. The wretches were preparing to pour boiling oil on the palms of his hands. He could, in anticipation, feel the frightful agony a thousandfold. He fell on his knees, he shed tears, he screeched like a pig, imploring mercy, offering to confess to any crime. Ah! the relief when he discovered that they were merely preparing a simple salad.

My first visit to Stambouloff illustrated the extent of his precautions. On my way to his humble house in the suburbs I was shadowed by detectives. When I reached it I had to satisfy a posse of sentinels. When I rapped at the door no one answered for ages. Eventually I realized that I was being scrutinized by an evil face through a grating. Admitted at last, I received nothing but rudeness from the dictator. What did I want? Really he was too busy to be bothered with visitors! The only interesting remark he made was a sneer at the Prince.

"I hear you have been to see our Coburger. Did he tell you he had ordered a new Court mantle of red velvet and ermine? It is just as well he should occupy himself with flummery of that sort. Then perhaps he won't try to interfere with serious things which he can't understand."

At the Union Club, however, Stambouloff presented a different figure. Inordinately vain, he loved to cut a dash and pose as a sportsman. Again and again I have

seen him taking an open bank at baccarat with huge piles of gold before him—Turkish pounds, 20-leva bits, French louis, Hungarian ducats, every currency you can think of. He lost incessantly, but did not seem to care. There was plenty more where that came from, and soldiers would be dispatched for fresh supplies from the treasury. Grekoff, the Foreign Secretary, however, was a very bad loser, grumbling loudly when luck went against him, and often forgetting to settle his card-debts.

The Union Club was primarily intended for diplomats. Others, however, were admitted, not only members of the Government, but journalists and Bulgarian officers. As Nicholas O'Connor (the British Minister) was kind enough to warn me, some of them were not punctilious about payment. One evening a lieutenant had a run of bad luck and began issuing I. O. U.'s. When they came into my hands I naturally passed them on, but the Austrian minister refused to take them. This gave me pause, but it seemed churlish to stop playing. The youth went off owing me £200, and the others remarked, "How can he ever settle? Why, his pay cannot be more than 40 francs a month." However, two years later, I received a letter from the British Agency asking for my instructions as to the disposal of £200 due to me "in consequence of certain transactions at the Union Club at Sofia." Doubtless, the lieutenant had become a general or an army contractor by that time.

I met O'Connor when I was traveling in Bulgaria. One day he visited me at the hotel when I had a poisoned foot bandaged up on the sofa. I said I hoped he would excuse my not rising. But at that moment he was very much on his dignity; he drew himself up as though I had taken a great liberty. He surveyed me sternly from the door and I thought he was going to withdraw in a

dudgeon. But when I explained my indisposition nothing could exceed his kindness. He stayed for an hour, cheering me with anecdotes, and presently he sent me books and fruit.

He had much to tell about his experiences as an attaché in South America, where he used to go for long rides and be held up by brigands. He would meet a noble looking *caballero*, who would take off his *sombrero* and make the innocent inquiry, "*Tiene usted dinero?*" (Has your Honor any money?) It might have been mere curiosity, like asking the time or the prospects of rain. But you knew quite well that it was a polite version of "Your money or your life!" However, it did not matter, for you had only to go out with a slender purse and the brigand never showed resentment. *Vacuus viator . . .!* The only thing you must not do was to put your hand in your pocket to produce the pelf. That would have been taken as an intention to produce a revolver and you would have had short shrift. The right etiquette was to return the bow and say, "*Si, señor, à la disposition de Usted*" (Yes, sir, at your Honor's disposal). Then you submitted to a search and went on your way.

Sir Charles Wyke, another Minister to a South American state, told me of more dramatic adventures. There was a wonderfully cool and shady garden, appropriately called *Las Delicias*, close to the Legation. One very sultry evening, he lay on his back there beneath a palm-tree and fell asleep. After a couple of hours a rising wind rustling among the leaves awoke him from a mid-summer night's dream. The surroundings were indeed idyllic, with their wealth of tropical vegetation and a pungent smell of magnolias, which used to come back to him long afterwards at moments of tense emotion.

Suddenly a strange, inexplicable impulse caused him to

raise himself on his elbow and look round. There in the brushwood was a tattered figure crawling stealthily towards him like a serpent. A long dagger glittered in the moonlight. In a few more seconds the desperado would have plunged it in the sleeper's breast. Wyke had left his revolver at home and had little hope of escape. Jumping to his feet he clasped his hand over his heart, thinking perhaps this night break the force of the blow. Instead of this, his action had quite a different effect. The man felt certain that a weapon was about to be drawn and immediately took to his heels.

"Of course, I was an absolute fool," Wyke concluded his story, "but when I saw him run I yielded to a natural instinct and unarmed though I was I started in pursuit. All through the gardens, down the alameda, right into the Plaza de la Constitucion we ran, and there I had the satisfaction of handing him over to the police. But Lord knows what I should have done if he had had the sense to turn round and show a bit of fight."

O'Connor, like most Irishmen, was genial and hospitable, with a certain vein of canniness and an uncertain temper. He would ask me to lunch or dinner several times a week and incite me to monstrous indiscretions. Then, without warning, he would suddenly snap over a trifle. For instance, one day I observed that the flag was no longer flying over the palace, and asked where the Prince had gone. O'Connor instantly asked his butler who had sent a brace of snipe. After a pause I repeated my question. He looked up sharply and took refuge in the butler again: "It must have been Prince Ghika. He said he was going to send me some. Are you sure there was no card?"

"Is there a secret about the Prince's movements?" I asked later on.

"There is always a secret about the Prince's movements.



There would be a secret if his cat had kittens. Why, he often leaves his flag flying for days after he has gone to Sandrovo."

Like most diplomats, O'Connor distrusted journalists, while wanting to use them. A certain Fitzgerald arrived at Sofia during my stay and it was fun to watch the way he jarred on every nerve of my fine friend. He had to be asked to lunch, but he was like a snake in the room, or a cat to Lord Roberts. To begin with, he was a Home Ruler. Then he was a blatant Socialist. Worst of all, he was an Irishman of the wrong sort. He was known as the stormy petrel of journalism. Whenever he appeared in a country he seemed to herald some sensational catastrophe. If he went to Constantinople, there would be an Armenian massacre; to Bosnia, an insurrection; to Salonica, a destructive fire. It was said that he had even been the forerunner of an earthquake. Now we were all agog to know what calamity he was portending for Bulgaria. Nothing did happen, however, beyond the murder of Belcheff, a minister, by komitajis.

Fitzgerald had a special spite against Austria and he told me of a practical joke he had once played on a grand scale. Week after week he addressed anonymous letters to an imaginary person at Poste Restante, Przmzl, containing the most alarming details of a vast conspiracy. Roumanian, Bulgarian, Servian secret societies were all at work to blow up powder factories and barracks, occupy cities with barricades, assassinate prominent personages. If there had been a word of truth in the revelations Francis Joseph would have been tottering on his throne. The letters being unclaimed, were naturally opened for return to the sender and the official excitement can be imagined.

Then Fitzgerald had the time of his life, gloating as he read of the movements of troops and concentration of garrisons, almost an imperial mobilization to thwart all these alarming inventions. But jests may sometimes be carried too far and he may have been unwise in boasting so much of his exploits. I saw him again in Athens after I left Sofia, and we had a farewell lunch before he started for Constantinople. After that, no one ever heard of him again. The restless wanderer had vanished without the faintest trace, drowned, hanged, stabbed, sent to Siberia, gone to the colonies, nobody knew and few seemed to care.

Another journalist, Jack Worcester, once came to me in London, saying he was hard up. As I knew the Balkans very well, he wanted me to invent a sensation for him to sell to the papers. The great thing was to produce convincing names and details. That was easy. Uskub, a plot to poison Bishop Firmilian, brigand bands preparing to kidnap the Vali; Mashkoff (a Russian consul), implicated, the woman in the case. . . . We elaborated definite dates when sensations were due at various villages in Albania. Worcester typed out a wonderful story and sent it to the *Daily Trumpet*, with a request for £50. Two days, three days, passed without a sign. Then the editor wrote that he had been unable to verify the facts, which was not surprising. Worcester replied that one could not expect to verify secret information and that it would be unwise to delay publication as events were moving rapidly. Then the story appeared with flaring headlines and all the names and details. But it had been completely rewritten, and when Worcester applied for his £50 he was told that the facts had come from "another source." Evidently not Worcester source, was

my comment. I believe that he went to a solicitor and eventually extracted £5 from the astute editor.

Next to Dr. Dillon, James D. Bourchier has been the most celebrated of our Balkan journalists. Take Jonescu told me how Dillon came to him for an interview when he was Prime Minister of Roumania: "He talked to me for half-an-hour, took elaborate notes of all *he* had said, and then went off to write two columns."

Bourchier seemed the last person to be a journalist. His deafness, his stupid face, his lack of method, his slipshod mind might all have been deliberate poses. He used to devote most of a short morning to lessons in Bulgarian, which he never learned to speak, and most of the afternoon to a monumental history of Bulgaria which he never finished. On his arrival as correspondent for *The Times* he was shadowed everywhere and prevented from gathering any news. But O'Connor took him up and he became a go-between with the Palace at a time when diplomatic relations were suspended.

Ferdinand took a sudden fancy to him and invited him to long carriage excursions, starting at six in the morning. Of course Bourchier could not be ready at that hour and Ferdinand had ultra-royal notions of punctuality. Anybody else would have been banished and disgraced, but Ferdinand amazed everybody by his indulgence to the new favorite. He merely quoted Louis XVI, with a smiling, "*J'ai failli attendre*" (I nearly had to wait).

Bourchier was now always at the Palace; he was impressed to teach the Court tango, or whatever was the new dance of the hour; he attended cabinet councils and laid down the law about foreign policy; he went about proclaiming *The Times* as "the seventh great power;" he

was even invited to remain in Bulgaria during the war as an honored guest. Jealous Greeks christened him Bouchoff, to suggest that he was virtually a Bulgar.

Ferdinand's uncertain temper spared no man. The most fleeting whim would induce him to turn his back on important statesmen or diplomatists and say rude things to them when the fate of his country might depend on their good graces. So Bouchier could not expect to escape altogether with his independent, semi-Irish nature. But his periods of disgrace never lasted long.

After one of them the reconciliation was accompanied by a surprising ceremony. He was shown into a bare waiting-room and left to meditate over his sins. Enter three flunkys in gorgeous livery, waving censers at the end of long silver chains. Up and down they wafted clouds of blue smoke through the air like acolytes, censuring his head and chest and the uttermost parts of his clothing. But for his surroundings, he might have imagined himself a holy image on a high altar receiving homage from the priesthood of some mysterious sect. Was this some whimsical jest on the part of the Prince to emphasize the completeness of his pardon? He entered into the spirit of the part, crossed himself and made many mocking obeisances.

When at last he was ushered into the presence, Ferdinand held out his hand and said: "I hope you didn't mind. I heard you had been visiting at a house where the children have measles, so I thought it best to have you fumigated. You know how scared I am of infection."

Bouchier died at Sofia towards the beginning of 1921, and was given an imposing funeral after lying in state in the cathedral for two days. The service was conducted by the Archbishop, all shops and places of busi-

ness being closed. Since his death, his drowsy face has actually appeared on the postage-stamps as a national tribute to his memory.

Another person for whom Ferdinand had a tender corner was the wife of the British minister. O'Connor had been allowed little more than a week-end for his marriage, and when he brought back his bride she was rather bewildered by the strangeness of Sofia, then a mixture of oriental barbarism and new German build-ings.

The Prince began with his stock question, "What do you think of my capital?"

"Well," said she, "it was a bit of a shock at first, but I am growing used to it. After all, now you have continued the railway to Sofia it won't be so bad. One will always be able to run over to Vienna."

He went off into peals of laughter.

"Now that," he cried, "is the prettiest compliment that has ever been paid to my capital. At last it has become tolerable because there is less difficulty in escaping from it! I must see what I can do to make it so pleasant that you may never wish to leave."

Take Jonescu had a poor opinion of Ferdinand, especially after he had succeeded in raising Bulgaria to a kingdom. Jonescu read me an autograph letter he had received from King Ferdinand. It was a great surprise, as they had never met and there seemed no reason for beginning a correspondence. I translate it from memory:

My dear Sir,

It has always been a source of deep regret to me that I have never had the privilege of making your acquaintance. I have followed your career from the outset with the utmost interest and admiration. If I were a Roumanian, I assure you that I should rank myself as the most fervent of Takists. (The fol-



lowers of Take Jonescu were known as Takists. Note that Take is a word of two syllables.) It may interest you to know that the peace of Eastern Europe is assured as I have no intention of tolerating hostilities in any circumstances.

Your sincere friend,

FERDINAND.

Within three days Ferdinand had declared war on Servia.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ROUMANIA

NEXT to Fiume I am inclined to vote for Bucharest as the maddest capital in Europe. It is certainly the most hospitable of all towards strangers. My wife met Mme. Emile Lahovary at Marienbad one summer and was told, "If you ever come to Roumania let me know and we will try to give you a good time." Naturally one does not take much notice of such vague invitations from stray acquaintances, but when we reached Bucharest, on a midnight of December, 1905, there were the Lahovarys waiting for us at the station with their carriage and pair. And next day we found we knew everybody. This in Roumania meant the social clique, chiefly of Greek origin, which then owned nearly all the land and money and political power in the country, spoke scarcely anything but French, maintained a French theater and French newspapers and had a supreme contempt for the marriage tie.

Divorces are so easy and frequent that if you go away for a month you find most of the married ladies have changed their names before your return. Nor is there any stigma attached to divorce. It does not interfere even with a welcome at Court. All Roumanian society is like one family, knows all about everybody else's most intimate affairs and finds infinite material for gossip. The great wealth means incessant entertainment on a very lavish scale. During a stay of four weeks, we had invitations every day to lunches and dinners and balls

and theater parties; the Government placed a steam-launch at our disposal to go up and down the Danube; high officials escorted us to visit salt-mines, petroleum-springs and every other object of interest. I remember a French version of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" at the theater. It was much too mild for Bucharest. "Well," said one lady, "I have seen 'The Second Mrs. Tanqueray,' and my only satisfaction is that I shall never be called upon to see the third."

I was at once made an honorary member of the Jockey Club and introduced to all the members in turn. This was very pleasant, but it had its drawbacks, for it is etiquette to leave cards within twenty-four hours of an introduction. I obtained a list and spent many laborious days driving round from door to door; but even so there was always a risk of cards not reaching their destination, and the omission of a call was considered a serious solecism. I noticed that Marghiloman, the President of the Club, was gushing at first, but soon cooled off. He did not return my call, and presently he would scarcely return my "good-evenings." However, before my departure, he received my P.P.C., returned the call at once and became very friendly. I learned afterwards that my first card had failed to reach him, and that, if a man did not return a call, it was usual to ask him at the next meeting, "*Vous avez reçu ma carte?*" (Did you receive my card).

Marghiloman was the chief champion of the Germans during the war and made violent efforts to persuade Roumania to come in against the Allies. This attitude caused me much surprise, for if anybody was frenchified in Roumania it was he. He was a great owner of race-horses, most of which were bred in France and ran frequently there. It was even said that he sent his wash-

ing to Paris every week. During the German occupation of Bucharest, when friends of the Entente had their houses pillaged, he was held in high esteem by the conquerors; and oddly enough no one seems to have cherished a grievance against him since the Armistice.

There was a good deal of high play at the Jockey Club, and I was initiated into the mysteries of unlimited poker, which means that you may raise to the extent of the whole amount on the table. Now I have found that, if one means to bluff at all, it is wise to do so at the outset, before the others know your game. We were five players, including a British vice-consul, who was addressed as Monsieur Gr-r-r-eeen. I anted 10 francs, they all came in for 20 francs. I raised a 100 francs and still they all came in, making 600 francs on the table. I stood pat on a pair of eights and bet 600 francs. All retired and said nothing but thought much when I displayed my pair, save only Gr-r-r-eeen, who grumbled that he had had three aces.

Next hand I dealt myself a pair of sevens, all came in, even when I had raised 100 francs once more. "You shan't bluff us again my boy," cried Gr-r-r-eeen, almost savagely. He went 10 francs on a triplet, his neighbor raised 100 francs on a flush, a third raised 500 francs on a full house, the others retired and I found I had drawn two more sevens. I went the whole 1210 francs and the three men saw me with great certainty that I was bluffing impudently once more.

I can still see their faces when I laid down my four sevens: their flushed faces, their open mouths, their goggling eyes. They all stood up and bent over my cards microscopically to make sure that the outrageous miracle was really true.

"Sapristi!" muttered a boyard.

"Per Bacco!" thundered an Italian engineer.

"This is a bit too thick! I'm off," were the farewell words of Gr-r-r-reen, as he rose in a rage and made for the door.

But, of course, after such a sensational beginning I came out a loser on the evening.

Once after an all-night sitting, when a dozen hardened gamblers were seeking refreshment in the coffee-room, a solemn footman came to say that my wife was asking on the telephone at what time I had left the club yesterday.

"Yesterday!" roared a young officer. "Yesterday indeed! Say that Monsieur is at breakfast, fortifying himself for another game of baccarat!"

It appeared that when she woke at eight and found me absent my wife had grown anxious. Knowing my virtuous temperament, she imagined that I had been killed or kidnapped by the gipsies, who have a bad reputation at Bucharest. So she summoned the manager and the porter and the boots and implored them to telephone to the police and insist on a search for me all over the city. However, they thought it wiser to begin with the Club, where the little incident aroused much mirth.

Carmen Sylva, the poet-queen, was then living in seclusion and taking no interest in anything but her large family of dolls, over which she wept most of the time. But I saw the Crown Princess (now Queen Marie), whose wild escapades and long solitary rides were the incessant talk of the town. With her magnetic charm and wonderful smile it was not surprising that so many hearts fluttered at her feet.

When she first came to Roumania, however, she found King Carol difficult to manage. He was a stiff Hohenzollern with exaggerated ideas about economy. Not



only did he reduce her allowance to a minimum, but he read her interminable lectures about her extravagance. And what cut most deeply was that she could not indulge her passion for horseflesh.

So one day she hired the foulest, most decrepit old cab in the capital and started off to pay a visit to her uncle-in-law. He was unusually affable, but, when they stood by the window just before her departure, he gave a great start as he caught sight of the cab in the palace-yard. It was, indeed, a repulsive object! The driver was filthy beyond words and arrayed in a hideous caricature of raggedness, the seats were a mass of holes, the traces and reins of knotted ropes; the horse, if it could be called a horse, was fit only for the knacker's.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the King, "what on earth is that? What imbecile has allowed such a scarecrow to pass the gates of my palace? I never heard of such an outrage. I will have the captain of the guards court-martialled. By the way, my dear, where is your carriage? I suppose it must have gone round to the stables, for I can see nothing except that frightful eyesore."

"That is my carriage," the Princess replied, nerving herself for the coming encounter.

"But what the—? Why the—?" the King stuttered, purple with fury. "Is this one of your pranks? Have you done this to humiliate me? If so, all I can say is that it is in the worst possible taste."

"Well, sir," she protested, "what would you have me do? Besides my own riding horse, I have only a carriage-pair, which has already been out all the morning and is scarcely in a fit state to come out again. As my allowance does not permit me to keep a proper stable, I am reduced to taking cabs. And as you have been so specially gracious to me today I propose to give myself

the pleasure of calling upon you every afternoon—in a cab. I can assure you that this is by no means the worst to be found in the streets of Bucharest.”

She was sent home in a court carriage with many vague threats, but she had succeeded in frightening the King so thoroughly that he presently consented to grant her a more decent appanage.

The marriage of her daughter to Alexander Karageorgevitch proves that politics are now stronger than inclinations, for Servians have always been viewed with profound contempt in Roumania, which prides itself on not being a Balkan state.

Take Jonescu, however, was a typical Balkan statesman. His followers were known as Takists, and he was himself a Takist, nothing but a Takist. His devoted services to England were true enough, but they were part of the game of “to thyself be true.”

In appearance he was partly stage villain, partly French statesman, which is sometimes almost the same thing. Overdressed, over groomed, sleek and overfed, with fat cheeks and a little waxed moustache and strongly scented hair, he reminded me vaguely of Deschanel. Like Deschanel, he was what the French call an *arriviste*, a man who has made up his mind to “get there” at any cost. With so much cleverness, it was a standing wonder that he never cut himself badly. He had many enemies, but they were all chosen even more carefully than his few friends. His financial operations would have made Hooley or Bottomley feel pigmies. Everything was on an imperial scale. While contriving to hold his own in the cock-pit of home politics, he was forever racing about Europe, keeping himself well in the limelight, keeping in touch with all the chief statesmen and journalists.

Once at the Ritz in London he expanded quite humanly.

Soon after receiving my card, he had telegraphed, "Very sorry I have a million appointments, but if you come round at midnight we can chat as long as you like." He arrived half an hour late, puffing fumes of wine after a good dinner at an Embassy, lolled back in a vast arm-chair in his sitting-room and proceeded to chat almost until dawn.

He began autobiographically. "I am a son of the people and proud of the fact. My father came to Roumania from a village in Bulgaria then belonging to the Turks. He was just a small peasant who took up commerce on a very small scale. I could surprise you with stories of the privations I endured as a boy. Wait one moment. Talking is thirsty work. I will ring for my man and we will have a bottle of champagne. I have tended cows, scrubbed floors, slept on hay. Luckily, my father made a little money soon enough for me to study. But I can say truthfully that all my career is my own. I became a lawyer, the most successful lawyer in the land. Nature endowed me with what you call the gift of the gab. No one can sway a jury or a vast popular audience as I do. And my humble origin stands me in good stead. You see, Roumanian society talks only French. The national language is regarded as a kind of native dialect, a smattering of which suffices for use with the servants. So I scored with Roumanian as my mother tongue. I suppose I have a natural gift for languages. I could speak seven when I was eighteen.

"Well, I may say that I have made a success of my life. I have made my mark on history. Kings and famous statesmen are at my beck and call. I shall have many statues when I die. It is true I have had to fight all the time, to win all my triumphs with my own right hand. But I have enjoyed every moment. The world

is a very pleasant place. I wonder whether you think so too. Ah! I remember hearing of your sensational play at the Jockey Club. I never gamble—except in politics, which is the most gambling game of all. I have never understood how anybody can waste time over a green cloth while a single woman remains alive in the world. Woman! What a mystery and joy! Woman and wine! Those are pleasures, not wrangling over cards for a few beggarly coins.

“No, I am not tired,” he went on, stifling a yawn, “and now we must do some work. I will give you material for twenty articles in the *Fortnightly Review*. But let me tell you the facts in French. My thoughts flow more quickly so.”

And for hours he delivered a succinct summary of all the affairs of Europe, as they affected his own country. The Dobruja question was then clouding the air with rumors of war, and he gave me the whole history of that district from the earliest times. He devoted at least half an hour to Bessarabia, he exhausted the agrarian question, he expatiated on the danger of Jews. In spite, or because of his potations, he was always eloquent, brilliantly sarcastic, delightfully cynical, conspicuously patriotic. If we had had a shorthand writer we could have compiled a whole book before I went home with the milk.

Women! Some bad tongues at Bucharest used to whisper that his affections were perforce platonic, but they were certainly catholic and notorious. His first wife was a remarkable woman. She had been an English governess in Paris and there were hints of “a romance” about the marriage, but in these degenerate days a love-match is so unusual that the world always calls it a romance.

When I first knew her at Bucharest, presiding over the most popular salon in that critical capital, she was still fresh. I saw much of her in London towards the end of the war and she seemed fresher still. Her face was a marvel of art, her skirts were the shortest in town and she contrived to disguise the stiffness of senescence by a nimbleness that was almost skittish. A few yards away she could often pass for sixteen. Mentally alert, she was very well read; full of current political knowledge, she was of great use to the Allied cause, writing many articles, providing journalists with material, mixing with the leading people in the land. Her vitality carried everything and everybody before her.

Every day she rode in the park on a fiery steed. One morning she had asked me to ring her up if I could lunch with her that day. There was more than the usual delay in obtaining a connection.

"Is that Madame Jonescu?"

"Wha-at?"

"Is that Madame Jonescu?"

"Good gracious! Haven't you heard?"

"No, what?"

"Madame Jonescu was thrown from her horse and killed near the Serpentine this morning."

Towards the end of the war I met a Roumanian statesman in Scandinavia and he told me a number of exciting experiences he had gone through. "We were in Paris when the war broke out," he said, "and it was astonishing how little the population knew about the near approach of the Germans, even after the government had retired to Bordeaux. Taxis went about as usual, until one day, when I wanted to go to the station, there were none to be found. I learned they had all



been requisitioned to take most of the Paris garrison out to make a last stand against the invaders.

"After the Marne we decided to go home, *via* Marseilles and Constantinople. The French railway service was wonderfully maintained and all we had to grumble about was having to sit bolt upright all night in a second class carriage. Nobody worried much about submarines in the Mediterranean at that time, and our only disagreeable incident was at Salonica. We had gone on shore in fair weather; but when we returned to the steamer a gale had sprung up and our boat tossed on to the top of a wave every time the steamer sank into a hollow. The Greek sailors were shouting and screaming. I still have no idea of how my wife was ever hoisted on board. In the Dardanelles we saw a huge old ship laden with mines, which were to be laid as soon as Turkey decided to declare war. The Allies ought to have come in and sunk that ship and occupied the Dardanelles, where the Turks had absolutely no ammunition. The presence of the Goeben and Breslau at Constantinople would have afforded an ample pretext. That was the first and perhaps the greatest mistake of the Allies in the war. By securing the Dardanelles they would have kept communications open with Russia, obtained her foodstuffs and supplied her with arms and munitions. Moreover, the Central Powers would have been absolutely surrounded and shut off from the East, neither Turkey nor Bulgaria could have joined the enemy. I wonder if you heard how the Goeben and Breslau escaped from the Mediterranean. It appears the Germans had secured the English wireless code, and they sent a message that the two ships had sailed westward when they had really gone east. The British fleet accordingly went off in the wrong direction.

"We were in Bucharest when the enemy were raiding

every day. There were no anti-aircraft guns and the Gothas did just what they pleased, flying quite low over the town and selecting their victims. Nine hundred people were killed in one street in broad daylight. They had crowded out of doors to gaze up at the aeroplanes and suspected nothing. Then the bombs dropped and there was fearful carnage. The streets literally flowed with blood and flesh and bones. It was a sight I shall never forget.

"Later on, we went to our place in the country, near the Russian frontier, and we saw the Cossacks come—amazingly fine fellows, with splendid uniforms and accoutrements, lacking nothing except guns and munitions. They were polite and well-behaved and we had nothing to complain of except that they cut down all our trees and burned our warehouses and took our stores. It was a very cold winter and they had no commissariat, so they thought themselves entitled to take what they pleased. Our house, which had stood in a wooded park amid farm buildings of all kinds, eventually remained isolated in a wilderness. One of the strangest sights was the passage of the Russians along the main road outside our drive. For fifteen days and nights this road was filled with a tumbling torrent of troops, exactly like a river in flood. The Russians were no good to anybody. When they were ordered to advance, they replied that they had no orders, or else they deserted openly in packs, waving their hands and saying they were off to 'Mama Russia.'

"They had a great disinclination to fight against the Bulgarians, whom they regarded almost as brothers. The Bulgarians were our worst and most savage enemies. You English have an amazing tenderness for them and I know they do not fight you as they fight us. During

the Balkan wars I owned a Bucharest newspaper and sent myself as correspondent to Bulgaria. I remember noticing that one of the lanes in a frontier village was called Gladstone Street. I hear also that the United States never declared war on Bulgaria and allowed Bulgarians to continue their occupations undisturbed in America. How do you explain that? The Bulgarians committed every conceivable horror against us. I saw one of their prisoners wearing a necklace of Roumanian babies' hands round his neck, and he saw nothing to be ashamed of, merely remarking that he wore it for luck. I need not tell you that it did not bring him much luck after we had taken him.

"Here is a curious fact. When the German invasion was expected our government had the unhappy thought of sending the Roumanian national treasure to Moscow for safety, several millions in gold, with a large escort. Now the Bolshevists have all the gold and no one knows what has happened to the escort."

## CHAPTER XIV

### MONTENEGRO

IN Paris after the Armistice I tried very hard to interest Take Jonescu in the cause of my dear old friend, King Nicholas of Montenegro. But Take was then up to his eyes in intrigues, which resulted in the formation of the "Little Entente" for the aggrandizement of Balkan states at the expense of their neighbors. Once I found Venizelos with him at his hotel and was surprised to read in the papers that Venizelos had left Athens that very day. Such are the small subterfuges of diplomacy. But it was Pashitch who played chief honeysuckle to his bee. He could think of nothing but Pashitch. He was always coming from or telephoning to Pashitch. And Pashitch was, of course, the prime mover in the long Servian intrigue against Montenegro, which culminated in an armed occupation of the country, the exile of the King and the massacre of most of the population.

I pointed out the immense services which Nicholas had rendered to the Allied cause, how he had saved Serbia from destruction after her ignominious rout, how Poincaré and Wilson and Lloyd George had repeatedly pledged themselves to his restoration.

Take listened attentively; but answered cynically that the King was an old man, and that it was ridiculous to think of delaying the reconstruction of Europe for the sake of one person. Serbia wanted Montenegro and Serbia must have it. When I spoke of elementary gratitude and chivalry, he merely said, "Pooh!"

"No, no," he faltered; "everybody's mind is made up. The old man's sentence has been passed. If you are a friend of his, tell him that he will gain nothing by making a fuss. You will be doing him a good turn if you can persuade him to be reasonable. I'll tell you what we are prepared to offer. Let him sign his abdication and he shall be made Governor of Ragusa with an income of £25,000 a year. He shall retain his title of King and it shall be an autonomous state as long as he lives. If he refuses, he will get nothing at all."

When I conveyed this proposal to the King he was very angry, not so much for himself as for his unfortunate people.

"What is happening in Montenegro," he exclaimed in his deep pathetic voice, "is compromising our victory and outraging every ideal for which the war was waged. How can I desert my children in their hour of need?" (He always spoke of his people as his "children.") "They are being exterminated, but no amount of suffering will ever shake their fidelity to the fatherland. They have resisted invasion for a thousand years. A mere handful of braves, they have held their own against the onslaughts of mighty empires. Montenegro may be conquered and destroyed, but there will be no peace so long as one of her brave sons remains alive. They are not to be terrorised by the threats of Monsieur Pashitch and his hired assassins. Do you know what Monsieur Pashitch said to me when he brought me official thanks for saving his country? Oh! he was very polite. He told me in the most natural way in the world that I must not bear malice over the attempt to blow up my palace with bombs, for assassination had now been recognized as a weapon of practical politics."

And what did your Majesty say to that?



KING NICHOLAS (*laughing*): "I told him he could scarcely expect me to endorse that opinion.

"What I complain of is the ingratitude," the King went on, with a sorrowful gleam in his eyes. "I have fought three wars for the sake of Servia; I saved her from one disaster and enabled her to retake Belgrade; I took the bread out of my children's mouths to supply her wants.

"Remember that I was the first to come to her rescue after the Austrian ultimatum, though no treaty bound me to do so, though no one knew whether the Great Powers would intervene. And what is my reward? This fratricidal invasion of the liberties of my people. There are many people in Servia who would like to call one of my grandsons to the Servian throne. As you know, their mother is a descendant of the House of Obrenovitch, and I have been asked to connive at the restoration of the old line; but *I am a King, not a conspirator*. I have steadfastly refused to encourage any movement against the Karageorgevitch dynasty, though hundreds of Servians have asked my help.

"Not a penny have they received from me. They have even threatened to kidnap one of my grandchildren and place him on the throne; but I always replied that I would forbid it, and that my grandchildren would obey me. I am content to trust in God and try to do my duty."

As he was then occupying a difficult position in regard to the Peace Conference, he asked me to show him anything I wrote before sending it to the press. Accordingly I brought him a French translation of my article to the Hotel Meurice next day. As he read the first paragraph he gave a smile of satisfaction and murmured, "*Voilà une oeuvre géniale*" (There is a work of genius!).

The following are a few extracts from the article:

Paris, 23 November, 1918.

The waves of democracy are destroying many illusions about God and Kings. Someone wrote the other day that Kings have commanded incredible devotion and never known how to profit by it. What revolting folly not to recognize the divine aura which has always encircled without always protecting good kings.

In my time I have known many kings, both good and bad, from Don Carlos VII, hero of the Spanish civil war, and the martyred King of Servia, down to foxy Ferdinand of Bulgaria; but for character, personality, courage and frankness, none to compare with my friend King Nicholas of Montenegro. It was he who condescended to tell me today that he regarded me as his friend and the friend of his heroic people, and I am prouder of that than of any other compliment I have received during my life.

I did not find him much changed by the passage of a dozen years. In spite of the sorrow of his life and the trials of his country, he still looks young. His dark brown eyes retain their flash of intrepidity. He looks you full in the face with the straightness and pride of a Bayard who knows neither fear nor reproach. His kindly smile is never to be forgotten. His sonorous and majestic voice is full of confidence in the future. The only sign of his eighty odd years is a slight deafness, which he explains by a life spent amid the roar of guns. What a tonic, what a medicine, what a prophylactic is a good conscience! He told me he had just begun to sleep well again—eight hours last night—after years of insomnia. I remarked that in this respect he resembled the civilized world after the nightmare of the last four years.

When I asked him for a message to the British people, he replied, "Remember that I was the first to hurry to the help of invaded Servia and that I continued the struggle to my last cartridge. I crossed the Drina and my 30,000 warriors enabled the Servians to recover Belgrade." Then he smiled and said we ought all to be very happy now that things had gone so well.

"Perhaps too well, Your Majesty," I replied, thinking of the perfidy of certain Allies.

As I rose to take leave and bent over the hand of this heroic

King, he told me that he should not forget that I had come to see him during the days of his exile.

Alexander Karageorgevitch, the present occupant of the Servian throne, was certainly privy to the conspiracy to keep his grandfather, King Nicholas, away from Montenegro after the war. Indeed, he went so far as to offer a pension of 300,000 francs a year if Nicholas would abdicate. This I am told was a trick, the Servians intending to stop payment as soon as they had secured his surrender.

The King spoke to me indulgently about this. "I do not complain of my grandson," he said. "He is young and has been misled by Pashitch." But he was evidently deeply grieved. Later on, Alexander came to Paris and wrote proposing to visit his grandfather, who showed his letter to a friend, asking, "What would you say?" Then, without waiting for an answer, he went on, "This is what I have said, 'I love my grandson with all my heart, but I refuse to meet the King of Servia'." Tears stole down his rugged cheeks as he said this.

On my return to England I found that Servian propaganda had poisoned British opinion against Montenegro, but I succeeded in interesting a certain number of Members of Parliament and other prominent people by publishing details of the reign of terror.

Wherever the Servians went, flames and massacres and pillage followed in their train. Every day a fresh village was destroyed. At Predisc no less than forty-seven houses were burnt in a few hours. The families of insurgents were imprisoned at Podgoritsa, Niksitch and Cettinje, and received no food save a few crusts of bad bread. Wounded insurgents preferred to kill themselves rather than fall into the hands of the Servians, knowing that they would be subjected to the most awful torture.

The brother of Zirko Boscovitch, a friend of mine then resident in Paris, was made prisoner after a battle, tied to a cart-tail and dragged over the rough roads for miles from Pagetitsi to Niksitch, where he was hanged to a tree in the principal square and stabbed to death with bayonets. Marco Margenovitch, a distinguished soldier, fell in battle and his body was taken to his native village, where, by order of the Servian Colonel Stojan Protitch, it was hanged to a post and left for three days. When attacking insurgents, the Servian regiments drove Montenegrin women and children and old men in front of them so as to be protected by this living shield; then the Servians used their cannons and guns and machine guns without regard for their helpless victims. Milija Stanatovitch and Mihail Bachetina of Antivari were ordered to swear allegiance to Peter Karageorgevitch, so that their names might be added to the list of Montenegrins desiring the conquests of their country by Servia. As they refused, they were assassinated in the following way: their eyes were torn out, their ears were cut off and their tongues were passed through a hole made in their jaws; they were left in this state for a considerable time and then their entrails were torn out with bayonets.

At last the Foreign Office was moved to send Count de Salis, British Minister at the Vatican, to investigate the whole situation. He was kept prisoner by the Servians at Cetinje and his life was in grave danger for some considerable time. But instead of demanding reparation for this outrage to their representative, the British Government suppressed his report and continued to defend the Servians. Again and again the report was called for in the House of Commons, but the Under-Secretary always replied flippantly that he had nothing to add to his previous refusal. And Lord Curzon actually dared to

inform the House of Lords that the Montenegrins anxiously desired union with Servia. This with the de Salis report in his pigeon-holes.

However, a friend of mine has seen that report. It is to the effect that a Servian army of occupation overran Montenegro after the Armistice and terrorized our gallant little ally with every barbarous outrage.

My first audience with King (then Prince) Nicholas was at Cetinje in 1908, during the State trial of Servians and others charged with attempting to blow him up with his whole family by means of bombs. I attended the trial every day and was struck by the fairness of the proceedings and the weight of evidence against the prisoners. There was a dramatic sensation when Radovitch, an ex-Premier of Montenegro, suddenly marched into court and gave himself up. He had been abroad when a warrant was issued against him and everybody thought that he would elect to remain there in safety. I visited him in prison where he was pacing up and down like a caged monkey, but he merely gave me a sullen stare when I asked him whether he had any message for the press.

Save in the quarters of the bomb-plotters, I found the Montenegrin prisons almost like nursing homes. The inmates could receive their friends and any supplies they required. They could go in and out as they pleased, for the gates were never shut; yet escapes were unknown.

I asked the jailer if there was much crime in the country.

"Crime!" he exclaimed, "we have no crime in Montenegro."

"Then all these gentlemen——?"

"Are incarcerated for taking human life. The national code of honor compels them to carry on blood-feuds. All would despise them if they failed to do so,



but unfortunately we have a law against manslaughter. Crime, indeed! Why you could leave a bag of gold by the roadside, and no one would touch it."

Lenient sentences were passed on the bomb-plotters. Later on Radovitch was pardoned and actually made Premier once more, a trust which he shamefully betrayed. Nicholas could never bear to punish anybody.

I found him in the garden of his palace, chatting with his Premier and a bishop and the commander-in-chief. It was a patriarchal scene, with all sorts of peasants strolling in as they pleased and using thee and thou with their Sovereign. He wore the national costume with the tambourine hat bound in crepe to commemorate the defeat of Kosovo five hundred years ago. My impression was of an old Highland chieftain out of a novel by Sir Walter Scott. Hale and muscular, with alert, piercing eyes, a dusky rugged face, great dignity, a keen sense of humor, a strong vein of sentiment.

I reminded him that I had seen him at Belgrade when he visited King Alexander and Queen Nathalie.

"Ah!" he sighed, "those were happier times."

During a long conversation over coffee and cigarettes, he asked me to write about the deplorable condition of the country.

"As you can see for yourself, we live for the most part in a wilderness of stones."

"Yes, sir; but you enjoy, almost alone in the world, the prime blessing of freedom among your ancient mountains."

"I dare say," he laughed; "but we cannot live on air or eat stones. You mean that we are free to starve."

After relating anecdotes of war against the Turks, he said slyly: "Don't think I'm posing as a hero. If you only knew, I am sometimes the greatest coward in the

world. No sooner do I step on to a boat than I begin to tremble all over, however calm the sea may appear. Once I set out in my yacht to visit the Emperor of Russia, but I had not gone very far when the wind began to howl and I gave orders to take refuge in the nearest harbor. There I remained for a week without being able to communicate with the world, and I could imagine the posters of the newspapers, 'MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF THE PRINCE OF MONTENEGRO AND ALL HIS FAMILY!'

This reminds me of a distinguished Russian general, whom I met at Monte Carlo at Christmas 1914. He was eager to rejoin his units, but told me he dreaded the journey across the Mediterranean more than he could say. I replied that I supposed the submarines were dangerous just then.

"What do I care for submarines?" he roared. "I have been through six campaigns and scores of battles with bullets all around me like hail. What I am afraid of is waves, sir, waves!"

General Lahovary, War Minister of Roumania, told me of his schooldays with King Nicholas at the Paris *Lycée Louis le Grand*.

"We were the greatest dunces there. So they placed us in a class by ourselves—the lowest class of all. However, if I was a dunce, Nicholas was even worse. Week after week, I came out first. At last he grew impatient and said to me, 'Look here, if you are first again, I shall punch your head.' So it became a regular affair. Every Saturday you might have beheld the future King of Montenegro and the future War Minister of Roumania in the courtyard in their shirt-sleeves pommelling each other for all they were worth. But though the future War Minister was stronger at his lessons, he was not nearly so strong at a fight. It always ended in the same

way; the future Minister sponging his bloody nose at the pump, while the future King executed a triumphant war-dance a few yards away."

Next day I saw him strolling about the main street with an equerry. They turned up to the market, where about a dozen boys were gazing wistfully at a barrow of fruit. "How much for the whole lot?" he asked the woman in charge. She mentioned three or four florins, which he took out of a leathern purse and handed over. "Now, my sons, fall to!" he cried with a merry roar, and he stood for some minutes watching the scramble with delight. In old days he used to sit under a tree and dispense justice like a primitive potentate, and all through his long reign he never abandoned his habit of talking promiscuously with any subjects he happened to meet on his rambles. It was quite a usual thing to see him jesting and playing with a large escort of children in the roads.

Someone told me that he knew all his subjects by sight, or at least by name. This is, of course, an exaggeration; but he was certainly acquainted with an enormous number of them. And while maintaining his dignity, he was extremely familiar with everybody. He thought nothing of slapping a peasant on the back, or laying a hand on his shoulder during a conversation. And he talked to everybody wherever he went, just as though all were members of his family. I was told that, during one of his walks in the neighborhood of Cetinje, he met a man carrying a big cotton umbrella to keep off the sun. "Bogami!" he exclaimed; "a Montenegrin like a woman with a sunshade!" Thereupon he seized the umbrella, broke it in two, and flung the pieces away into a valley. Then he compensated the man and chaffed him good humoredly. When he talked to a peasant he usually gave him

money or a present of some kind as a souvenir of the occasion. He would stop people to examine their guns and pistols, scolding anybody who carried them unloaded. Harry de Windt told me how, when Princess Helena was betrothed to the present King of Italy, and there was high revelry at Cetinje, King Nicholas was suddenly seized by a crowd of soldiers and frogmarched along the main street, roaring with laughter like a school-boy.

He hated beards and his secretary Ramadanovitch told me how he had received a royal command to shave his. "I will shave my moustache, too, if your Majesty desires," was the reply; and the King was vastly pleased, for a Montenegrin would part with almost anything sooner than with his moustache.

In spite of his advancing years, he was wonderfully active, indeed almost tireless. He was generally at work in his study by three or four in the morning, winter as well as summer. But he was considerate enough not to require the presence of his secretaries so early. When, however, they attended voluntarily, he was very grateful.

He was far more pious than most of his subjects and went to church every morning, often finding himself the only worshiper. And there was an almost primitive simplicity about his religion. "After all," he said more than once during the crisis in Paris, "there is a Providence in these things. Providence has protected us often in the past, and will protect us now." Unfortunately Providence did nothing of the kind.

He summed up his benevolent autocracy in a wonderful phrase: "A Prince should be a Liberal, his subjects Conservative." And though he himself volunteered a constitution, the affection of all Montenegrins left him master of their destinies. They could not forget that all

the progress of his long reign had been due to his personal initiative—schools, roads, public buildings, post and telegraph, motor service, military reorganization, legal reform, as well as the great expansion of his dominions. He was the last survivor from the age of chivalry.

From Cettinje I paid a visit to Prince Mirko, Nicholas's younger son at his villa near Podgoritsa. He was married to Princess Natalia Constaninovitch, one of the last descendants of the royal house of Obrenovitch of Servia. He and his brother Danilo were a great contrast to their father, being frenchified and dandified. Mirko, however, had great charm of manner and talked well about art and literature. He had been a bit wild and fond of a gamble, but when I commented upon a roulette-wheel on his table, tears gathered in his eyes, and he said: "I shall never play again. It reminds me of Monte Carlo and my unhappy time there when my two beautiful children fell victims to malaria."

Evidently brought up on strict patriarchal lines, he grew quite indignant when I mentioned a rumor that he might become sovereign or governor of an independent Macedonia.

"Now listen to that!" he protested, "The way things get invented. I am a soldier and have to obey the orders of my chief. Still more, I am a Petrovitch and have eyes and ears only to follow the behests of the Head of my House. If he told me to go to Macedonia, or to the gates of Hell, I should set forth on the instant. But the idea that I should plan or plot for myself! It is intolerable, outrageous!"

After visiting Mirko, I went round the Lake of Scutari on Nicholas's motor-launch, which he had placed at my disposal. There was an excellent lunch and some of the scenery was very beautiful; but when we came



near the Turkish shore, our pleasure was damped, for we were fired upon from a block-house and had to beat a hasty retreat. Ramadanovitch, Nicholas's secretary, remarked that this always happened, and two sailors had been wounded the week before. The Albanian guards could not stand the sight of the Montenegrin flag. Besides, they probably hoped to bag a Prince one day.

Here are some notes giving a friend's last impressions of King Nicholas shortly before his death.

Christmas Day, 1920.

At the Villa Arethusa, Cap Martin by 9.30 appointment. At the house of the Crown Prince Danilo to see the King. Great bowings on the part of servants, etc. Ushered into room. Family portraits. Log fire burning. Felt misgivings. The Crown Prince came in, very cordial, effusive. Says the King is "nervous" and ill, upset by the French note, (which H.M. presently sent down for me to read) announcing that the French Charge d'Affaires would no longer act as Montenegro had elected to join Serbia. Crown Prince said, "*Tout est fini.*" Burning injustice! France out for business, concessions. "How will Italy act?" I asked. Shrug of shoulders. England is the only honest country, but she does not know. King comes in. Shock. Bent, feeble, broken. "*Je suis malade, (I am ill) mon cher ami.*" Hand on heart, "*ici*" (here). Impossible to do more than cheer him up. French note nothing. France has always been against M. It is nothing. Courage.—"But to whom do you look for courage? To an old man of 84 on the verge of the grave?"—The old man brightened up. His only thought is his country. But it was a broken King I saw. The shame of it!"

When King Nicholas died a regiment of stalwart Montenegrins arrived at San Remo for the funeral. There were various rumors as to who paid for their journey from their devastated land. Some say the King of Italy, some Sir Basil Sakharoff, who is supposed to have financed the Emperor of Austria's air raid to Hungary. Be that as it may, they made a brave show,

these magnificent animals with their bright new uniforms bristling with innumerable weapons. It was a "Prisoner of Zenda" scene when they advanced, swords in air, to swear allegiance to the King's eldest son Danilo.

He was reluctant and demurred that the times were not ripe: it would be unwise to stir up strife with the Powers, and so forth. But the simple mountaineers had little patience with political shuffles. All they knew was that "hereditary right surmounts the rocks," that their country was in the hands of cruel aliens after a thousand years of freedom.

Danilo whispered to his friends, "I have a house in Paris and a beautiful villa at Cap Martin and plenty of money through my wife. By temperament and education I am almost a Frenchman. I want to enjoy life and I know I can do so in France. What have I to gain by claiming sovereignty over a few rugged rocks which are in the possession of overwhelming forces? I should only be knocking my head against a brick wall and causing a rapid death. Even if I succeeded, what would my existence be but one constant guerilla warfare amid privations and discomforts of the most unpleasant kind?"

But when he saw his determined warriors, he was afraid. There was no knowing what they would do if they were thwarted. With very bad grace he received their fealty, listened to their wild enthusiasm, accepted an illusive and thankless throne. No sooner were they safely out of the way, however, than he hastened to abdicate in favor of the next heir, Mirko's little son, Michael, Mirko having died as a prisoner in an Austrian hospital during the war. King Nicholas had appointed Alexander Devine, a schoolmaster near Winchester, as guardian to the boy, who was to be educated in England. But Servian

intrigues prevailed, and Michael remains virtually a prisoner.

The Servians have sequestered all the possessions of the Montenegrin Royal family. Country houses, valuable Sèvres vases given by the Czar, a complete service in silver for a hundred persons, money in the bank belonging to the princesses, pictures, household linen—all have been taken. The Princesses Xenia and Vera, writing in January, 1922, said that the sale of one of the Turkey carpets would keep them for a year. The Queen and the Princesses had been left without means and lived on the bounty of their relatives.

Before Nicholas's death I made one last effort to serve his cause. It did not succeed, but I felt rewarded by the approval of this noble monarch.

I received the following letter from his Minister for Foreign Affairs:

*Cher Monsieur,*

*Je regrette infiniment que la maladie m'ait empêché de vous voir et de serrer la main d'un ami qui nous est si précieux. Je suis heureux de voir en vous un homme qui, pour des raisons de morale et de justice défend la cause de ma chère patrie, laquelle, après avoir pendant des siècles versé son sang pour la liberté des opprimés, au lieu de recevoir au moins une récompense morale pour ses immenses sacrifices, voit sa liberté menacée et sa population exposée aux pires excès. Ceux de ses enfants qui avaient quelques mérites, se trouvent actuellement, soit dans les prisons, soit dans les montagnes, tandis que sur nos foyers détruits gouvernent ceux mêmes qui ont dans la grande guerre également combattu pour la cause invincible des Alliés.*

*Je vous prie de vouloir bien, à votre retour, me fixer un rendez-vous.*

*Je vous prie d'accepter, mon cher Monsieur, l'assurance de ma très haute considération.*

J. S. PLAMENATZ,

Dear Sir,

I regret infinitely that illness should have prevented me from seeing you and shaking hands with a friend who is so precious to us. I am happy to recognize in you a man who, for reasons of morality and justice, defends the cause of my dear fatherland, which after having shed its blood for centuries on behalf of the liberty of the oppressed, instead of receiving at least some moral reward for its immense sacrifices, beholds its liberty menaced and its population exposed to the worst excesses.

I hope that when you return you will have the goodness to make an appointment to see me.

I beg you to accept, my dear Sir, the assurance of my very high consideration.

J. S. PLAMENATZ.

And Dr. Chotch, Minister of Justice, etc., wrote:

Ministère Royal d l'Instruction Publique et des Cultes  
de Montenegro.

Cabinet du Ministre.

Neuilly-sur-Seine,  
le 30 Mars 1920.

Cher Monsieur,

L'intérêt généreux des nobles amis du Montenegro, parmi lesquels vous comptez, est un baume sur les blessures saignantes de notre infortunée patrie et de son peuple martyr . . . Le peuple monténégrin est exterminé, il souffre, mais sa foi reste inébranlable dans son triomphe. Sa vie d'Etat et son indépendance millénaire l'y encouragent.

Je me permets de vous faire un appel ardent en vous priant de continuer la lutte que vous avez entreprise à l'égard du petit allié, le grand martyr.

Je saisis cette occasion pour vous réitérer, cher Monsieur, avec mes remerciements, les assurances de ma considération très distinguée et dévouée.

DR. CHOTCH.

Royal Ministry of Public Instruction and Worship of Montenegro  
Neuilly-sur-Seine, 30th March, 1920.

Dear Sir,

The generous interest of the noble friends of Montenegro, among whom you are reckoned, is balm to the bleeding wounds of our unfortunate fatherland and her martyred people.

The Montenegrin people is being exterminated, it suffers, but it maintains an unshakable faith in its triumph. Its life as a state and its independence during a thousand years encourage it therein.

I permit myself to address you an ardent appeal begging you to continue the struggle you have undertaken on behalf of the small ally, the great martyr.

I seize this opportunity of reiterating to you, dear Sir, with my thanks, the assurances of my very distinguished and devoted consideration.

DR. CHOTCH.



## CHAPTER XV

### D'ANNUNZIO

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO was sufficiently established at Fiume to dream of fresh adventures. He had saved Fiume from the imperialist maw of the upstart "Kingdom of the Servians, Croatians and Slovenes;" he was said to be meditating a raid on Valona, to deliver it from Servian tyrants; why should he not go a step further and strike a blow for martyred Montenegro? I could assure him that two thousand Montenegrin refugees were at Gaeta, only awaiting a signal and a convoy to cross the Adriatic and fight for the deliverance of their brethren; there was also a promise of many volunteers from the Italian Nationalist Party.

But there were difficulties about visiting d'Annunzio. I started from Venice and was stopped at Abbazia by the Italian military authorities. They had evidently gathered some whisper of my intentions, for the colonel at the permit office quibbled over my passport. It had been endorsed for Dalmatia by the Foreign Office in London, but Fiume was not Dalmatia. I must obtain a further indorsement from the British Consul at Trieste. Even then he would not be satisfied. In my own interest, I must have a safe-conduct from d'Annunzio, promising not only to admit me, but—to let me go away again. I said that was my risk and did not concern the Italian authorities, but the officer smiled and said he should feel responsible if anything happened to me while I was "trying to do a little politics." I was allowed to fill up a telegraph

form and had it passed by the censor, only to learn at the Post Office that telegrams might be paid for, but did not go through.

Unfortunately I had not yet met Tom Morgan, an American journalist, who had discovered a way of dodging the guardians of the threshold. He told me he came through half a dozen times without any permit, having been "made wise," as he phrased it, by a chance acquaintance in a restaurant. What he had to do was to take aside the guard on the Trieste-Fiume line and not offer bribes, but beg the loan of a railwayman's cap. At Mattuglie, the frontier station, he seized a lantern and ran up and down the platform with amazing zeal. All was well, but presently there was a scarcity of caps, or the soldiery grew suspicious, so he had to hide in the tender and emerged as black as any Ardito's cap.

Later on the authorities grew wiser and searched the engine and asked mock railway-men for passports. Then he left the train on the wrong side and walked along the line to a signal box, where he was told the train would slow down, as there was regular connivance to entrance to Fiume. Mistrusting the high steps and stiff handles of Italian cars, he climbed on to the engine where he met with a bad reception from the driver, but not until he was within an easy walk of Fiume. This earned him some startling headlines in New York.

### *TOM MORGAN DEFIES DEATH TO VISIT THE OUTLAW OF FIUME*

I went round meekly to the back door with more patience than difficulty. An all-night journey to Venice, another all-night journey to Ancona with three small hours in Bologna's waiting-room, then I caught the boat

to Zara with one minute to spare, feeling like Jules Verne's hero rushing round the world in eighty days.

At Zara, Admiral Millo, Governor of Dalmatia, gave me audiences and dinners and motors and passports. A practical poet, this dictator of the Adriatic, a great gentleman beloved by patriotic mobs, full of sly humor. At dinner he teased an English traveler who sympathized with Servia's claim to Dalmatia: "Why do you speak of Ragusa? That is very inconsistent of you. Surely you ought to call the place Dobrevnik. That is its Servian name."

The Admiral's charming daughter and many of his officers talked English like natives, and, unlike most Italian nationalists, he expressed warm British sympathies. The only fly in the ointment of our dinner party was the presence of a little Clerical (*Bartito Popolare*) deputy named Vassallo, who had come over to study the Dalmatian question. When we traveled inland together, he made me come on to his platform at a meeting and proceeded to criticize England: "I have often said before, and I say it in the presence of this Englishman, that England is playing a selfish part in the reconstruction of the world. While prating of liberty, she persists in the oppression of the weak in India, in Egypt, in Malta, above all in unhappy Ireland——"

Then "this Englishman" rose and walked out amid the cheers of the audience, who resented the speaker's lukewarmness about "Italian Dalmatia," the only question of interest to them.

On reaching Fiume I found d'Annunzio as elusive as ever. Day after day, I was summoned to his palace only to be told that he was unable to see me until the morrow. People said that drink or drugs was responsible for his seclusion, or that he was virtually a prisoner in

the hands of his Arditi. But I do not believe that, as he was always ready to receive a deputation from Venice or Naples or Florence or Zara with flags and bands. And no one could question his unrivaled vitality, his amazing industry. He wrote half a dozen manifestoes every day, prepared lyrical harangues, continued to compose plays and poems and film scenarios, inspect troops, inspire enthusiasm, carouse at the Ornithorhyncus, contradict the correspondent of the *Morning Post*. He had set up a text over his bed, "*Per non dormire*" (Not for sleeping), and he never seemed even to slumber.

He took special pride in the invention of nicknames. His supper haunt was the Ornithorhyncus, with a private room "reserved for the Commandant;" his legionaries were Ironheads, *Teste di Ferro*; cherry brandy was "blood of the Morlacchi" or ancient Illyrians; Fiume was "the holocaust city," though for my part I saw little sign of privations there.

The only time I had speech with him was for a minute or two at the festival of the *bersaglieri* in a kind of hollow amphitheater near the frontier of this little realm, which he told me proudly was "a little smaller than San Marino, a little bigger than Monaco." He looked very small himself, dignified, defiant, picturesque with his plumed hat, uncanny with his single eye. As he stood on his platform he might have been about to receive a charge of cavalry. When he uncovered as a preliminary to pronouncing winged words amid a religious hush, he was the real old round-head, grim, bald, madly inspired.

"All mad people come to Fiume," said one of my boon companions, who knew nothing about me; and d'Annunzio certainly exhibited mystical vagaries. But he was shrewd and foreseeing, he performed a daily miracle in keeping up the spirits and devotion of his flock. To his little

army of occupation, even to most of the stolid citizens, he was more than king or hero. Indeed, in his semi-blasphemous pronouncements he almost laid claim to be divine. He talked of his Cavalry, his crucifixion for the redemption of Fiume, and he never tired of exclaiming, "My will be done!"

The most graphic portrait of this strange being is probably to be found in a speech which I heard him deliver:

"Legions of land and sea, comrades in arms and soul, let us render thanks to our god, the god whom, in a breath of supreme fervor, you are creating every day in your own likeness. Once upon a time there was an Italian saint who wept when he was about to pass to the beyond. Asked why he wept he replied, 'I weep because Love is no longer loved!' Behold, he weeps no more. He smiles, for now he knows that Love is loved, that Love has never yet been so infinitely beloved. And his smile kindles the hem of the banner which floats above my head. Praise and thank we all our God. Whoso hath believed is cleansed. Whoso hath doubted is cleansed. And whoso hath sinned against Love, Love hath forgiven him. . . . We can never be beaten. I want to burn that sentence into your hearts. I want you to repeat it with one voice in unison: We can never be beaten. If a vile Italy denies us and abandons us, we alone will save her future.

"This remnant of us is to-day a greater Italy, oh my legions. You will not fail me losing yourselves in vain disputes. I will not fail you though I remain utterly alone. Here I dedicate to you my life and all that in me is worth more than life, all that in me can never die. Away across the sea I espy an Italy submerged in a horrible sewer. But the Italy which lives within our breasts, our Italy, how beautiful she is! Ah, the loveliness of



Italy! Ah, the potent passion of Italy! How sweet it is to live and suffer for her, for her to fight and die. . . . The hour of understanding has struck. Fortune does not favor the brave to-day; not fortune, but the soul. Do you understand? One heart, one sword, one league and covenant. With me! Shoulder to shoulder, elbow to elbow, arm in arm, with me. Just like the chains you forge when you fling your vermilion hymns up to the sun and stars. With me! Comrades of your comrade, faithful to your faithful chief! With me to the goal and beyond the goal, with me till death and far away beyond!"

If his speeches were delivered by anyone else or to almost any other audience, they would be laughed to scorn.

Yet what a human mountebank! There was a gala performance of one of his own plays at the theater one night, crowded with legionaries. In the middle of the second act, he raised his hand in his box and cried, "Enough of this tedious trash! Let us now proceed to sing patriotic songs." And the unfortunate mummers had to join in the choruses.

He once told the actor Le Bargy that he would rather kill himself than be condemned to a humdrum life. "I have lived a violent life," he said, "and I mean to die a violent death." He always carried poison in a ring. He once sent a notice of his death to the papers to see what they would say.

Enemies have denied him everything, even his beautiful name and his reckless courage. They started a legend that he was not Gabriel of the Annunciation but plain Mr. Rapagnetta; or else they pointed out that *annunzio* means advertisement rather than annunciation, and he is certainly Gabriel of the Flaring Advertisement.

As to Rapagnetta, I have seen a copy of his birth certificate—Gabriele, son of Don Francescopaolo d'Annunzio, the birth being registered by Don Camillo Rapagnetta. On the other hand, I have spoken with a postal official who told me that most of the poet's correspondence came to him addressed Rapagnetta and that when it came for d'Annunzio, he explained this was his stage name.

Not even his enemies can deny that he has lived a violent life. He fought his first duel when he was twenty; he proclaimed his love affairs to the whole world; he fled abroad from creditors and went through "a decameron among women, sculptors, musicians, poets and princes;" he was elected to Parliament and his election was twice invalidated because he had been condemned to five months' imprisonment for adultery; he appealed, entered Parliament as a Conservative, promptly became a Socialist, then grew bored and went abroad again; in 1915 he suddenly returned and forced Italy into the war by his inflammatory speeches; during the war he performed prodigies of valor and lost an eye in aviation; when Fiume was evacuated by Italian troops in 1919 he headed a handful of braves took possession and remained there for twenty-seven months as uncrowned king.

If d'Annunzio held aloof from me, I found his staff very easy of access. His Prime Minister said to me quite frankly: "Europe has left us in a tight corner. We have to do a little piracy now and then. No one helps us, so we help ourselves." This referred to the seizure of a transport outside the harbor, followed by an exploit of the poet's emissaries at Catania. They boarded a tramp steamer with romantic secrecy, overpowered the crew and brought her into Fiume. After that they had plenty of food for a time.

The only sign of privation in the "holocaust city" was

the uniforms of his ragged regiments. The legionaries were clad in keeping with the comic opera surroundings. The luckiest wore bright terra-cotta khaki, suggestive of window blinds, a legacy of the expelled French-Annamites, but the substitute uniforms included sailcloth, sporting tweeds, striped and speckled cotton, almost everything except *charmeuse*. The breeches were so wide that they could stow away an infinity of loot or at least a week's rations. Some of the tunics were like overcoats, others like small boys' jackets. Occasionally, you met a brave whose neck suggested that of a young lady at a ball. Nearly all grew their hair like Polish pianists; some were bareheaded, others had tin helmets or cocks' feathers, and the majority poised a black fez acrobatically at the very back of their heads with a long black tassel wagging in the breeze.

After meeting the Prime Minister I was taken to the Chief of the Cabinet, a plump smart officer, who insisted on talking slow correct French, in spite of my appeals for quick, wild Italian. As I rose to go I saw an odd look in his eye, he searched his desk, and offered me a pamphlet, where I read that, "there remains a life-spot in the world; it is Fiume; there remains a light-spot; it is Fiume; my will be done. The Commandant, Gabriele d'Annunzio."

Finally, I saw the Commander-in-Chief, General Ceccherini, the hero of a hundred fights, really too great and straight a man for this atmosphere of comic opera. He took me by both hands, overwhelmed me with thanks for my visit, introduced me to nine officers and then . . . produced a pamphlet, where I read that, "if destiny seeks to escape, we will snatch her! If destiny remains obdurate, she shall be shattered. The Commandant, Gabriele d'Annunzio, Fiume, d'Italia."

I hastened to ask, "When do you start for Valona?"

As this design was supposed to be a profound secret, he nearly jumped out of his skin. But the jump was soon followed by smiles intended to tell me nothing. I remembered a story of an indiscreet old lady and Disraeli's reply, "Oh! you dear!"

"X.": "Take me with you as your war-correspondent."

GENERAL CECCHERINI: "We could desire nothing better than an impartial witness."

"X.": "Now I must protest. No one has ever accused me of impartiality. Partiality is the first duty of friendship."

That evening I made a last effort with a note to the General, in my best imitation of Fiuman high-falutin:

Most Illustrious General,

Deeply moved by your kind reception, I permit myself to abuse your kindness once more and pray your most illustrious Lordship to intercede with the Commandment to grant me an audience even though it be only for a few minutes, as I should like to interest him in the Montenegrin question, for which I am charged to solicit his powerful help. I am most happy to remain in this city of luminous faith (*fede luminosa*), but I feel somewhat anxious to continue my work for the Montenegrin cause at Zara, or else, with the help of your most illustrious Lordship, in Albania.

With many very distinguished greetings, and a renewal of all my thanks.

Your most devoted,  
X.

Next day I received an equally devoted reply regretting the unavoidable engagement of the Commandant but assuring me that doubtless on the morrow. . . .!

This was too much. I sought out d'Annunzio's secretary and told him I was off. Evidently the Commandant could not or would not help and I was tired of waiting.

"Well," he said with an odd smile, "It's your own

fault. I asked you when you arrived whether you were in a great hurry and you unwisely said no. Otherwise you would have been received at once. The Commandant likes to keep foreigners here as long as possible so that they may witness the blessings of his rule. But if you have really made up your mind, I will see you off by the afternoon train. Perhaps, I may have some news for you."

The smile was explained to me presently by a Swiss journalist, who had learnt that I should not be allowed to depart. The warnings of the Permit Office at Abbazia had not been so fantastic after all. Evidently the best plan was to make a dash by car. When I reached the frontier with its strange stone barricades half across the road I began to wonder what would happen. My passports were taken away for what seemed quite a long time, the soldiers outside were terribly inquisitive, but nothing happened. I was allowed to depart in peace.

Some days later, I traveled back to Venice with d'Annunzio's secretary, who had been discharged in the meanwhile. He said the Swiss journalist had been told to warn me for a joke. I think d'Annunzio should be nicknamed *le grande F(i)umiste*.

At the same time, consciously or unconsciously, he was certainly the father of Fascism. Nearly all his speeches and celebrations and ceremonies owed their inspiration to ancient Rome, and the fasces of her lictors must certainly have been revived by him as an emblem of unity. It was in 1920 that I first heard of Fascist clubs and everybody regarded them as his special supporters, his home front, scarcely distinguishable from his legionaries. When I wanted to go to Fiume it was the Fascists of Venice who made my journey possible. On my return they started a weekly newspaper to air their views, and I



contributed a sympathetic article to the first number. At that time they were actually fighting the Socialists, and, when a bomb was thrown in St. Mark's Square, opinions were divided as to the culprit being a Socialist or a Fascist. The bomb struck the chair where I had been seated two minutes previously, and I came back in time to see blood on the pavement beside it.

It was at this time that I first heard of Benito Mussolini as d'Annunzio's lieutenant in Italy. There was talk of the King being driven out and d'Annunzio being proclaimed dictator. I fancied Mussolini was the famous brigand of that name, a national hero of the Robin Hood type, whose name was still flaunted on clubs and coffee-houses in the neighborhood of Naples. But no, this was the son of an illiterate blacksmith in Romagna. Almost self-taught, he became at twenty the teacher of yokels more illiterate than himself, and eked out his pittance by writing for Socialist papers. After serving his apprenticeship of life as casual laborer, jail-bird and beloved vagabond, he soon became editor of the chief socialistic paper in Italy and ran it remarkably well without experience or journalistic training. Like many another, he was suddenly converted by the war. He fought and bled and returned to found the Fascist party. Like his Cæsarian model he came, he saw, he conquered.

When I first met him at his newspaper office I was impressed by his magnetism, determination, straightforwardness and self-confidence, but he struck me as the most unlikely leader of Latin mobs. He might have been the preacher of a mystical religion, with his glistening gypsy eyes, bulging forehead, slow oracular speech and perfect repose. Or he might have been a prize-fighter with those bulldog jaws, immense shoulders, and that watchful pugilistic glance which seemed ever on the

alert to dodge a blow. I noticed the big thumbs which chiromancy attributes to born rulers; and once or twice when he was giving an order or dictating a manifesto he had that inspired look which sycophants have imparted to portraits of Buonaparte.

There was never the faintest resemblance of a demagogue about him. It was only when I saw him speaking to a crowd that I realized something of his power. He did not rant or beat the air or strike theatrical poses. In simple, almost biblical language, he spoke of the grandeur that was Rome, he recalled the glories of the middle ages, while the gist of his discourse was self-sacrifice. Yet he played upon the souls of his hearers like a master on his violin. Now they were moved to wrath, ready to set forth at a nod and burn communist clubs; then the tears streamed down their cheeks as they knelt with outstretched arms in a sacrament of patriotism; or a few minutes later they would be convulsed with rude laughter over some Rabelaisian quip.

## CHAPTER XVI

### SERVIA

I FIRST visited Serbia in the nineties, when I explored every village. The country was then backward but happy. In 1902, I found a hot-bed of political intrigues which were worked by typical Balkan self-seekers, that is to say half-educated persons in silk hats and frock coats. King Alexander (Obrenovitch) was too honest and independent for such an atmosphere. He forsook the old policy of depending on Russia or Austria and made the fatal mistake of placing the interests of his country first.

The result was that the Russians helped a few discharged officers to murder him and Queen Draga in the small hours of the eleventh of June, 1903. The Russian Minister, Charikoff, watched the progress of the crime through the blinds of his window opposite the palace, like Rizzio "looking through his hands." The conspirators broke open the palace doors with dynamite, after killing the guard, and then spent two hours hunting for the sovereigns, who had taken refuge in a dress closet. Loyal troops were on their way to bring relief, and, if the sovereigns had remained hidden a few minutes longer, they might have been on the throne to this day. But the baffled conspirators were firing right and left, and a bullet went through the door of the closet grazing the Queen's ear. She gave an involuntary cry and was discovered. They burst in and the King stood in front to protect her. The sight of Majesty awed the wretches for a few moments and they made a show of retiring, until Colonel

Mashin, brother of the Queen's first husband, taunted them and brought them back.

An awful scene ensued. There was a volley wounding but not killing the royal pair. The King was then flung out of the window. He clung to the bars and his fingers were hacked off by swords one by one. The Queen was stripped naked and subjected to Sadic outrages. Like Queen Mary of England, she had been led by doctors to believe in the advent of a baby which never came. The Czar had even promised to be godfather. Now she was ripped up with a sword, her silk nightdress was plunged into her body and held up all streaming with blood by an officer named Kostitch, who cried with a mocking laugh, "Here is the long expected baby of Queen Draga. . . ."

The conspirators now seized the reins of power, telegraphing all over the country that the sovereigns had committed suicide together and that Peter Karageorgevitch had been proclaimed King. Then began the usual campaign of calumny, for which Balkan states are famous. The world was informed that King Alexander had been half-witted, Queen Draga a loose woman. There was not a word of truth in either charge. The King was remarkably intelligent, as I can testify from many private conversations. Shortly before his murder, he asked me to draw up a new constitution for Servia, and, in discussing it, he displayed an intimate knowledge of political philosophy. Queen Draga had been previously married to a worthless engineer and had suffered poverty after his death. But there had never been a whisper against her morals. The best answer to the charges is that Queen Nathalie, Alexander's mother, should have appointed her Lady-in-Waiting, for Nathalie was prudish about women's relations with men.

It was at Nathalie's house near Biarritz that Alexander

first met and loved Draga. Nathalie was furious when she heard of his infatuation and broke off all relations with him. Soon after his marriage, she said to me in her colloquial English, "If he is not careful, he will knock his nose one day." The chief opposition to Draga came from jealous women of the so-called upper class in Serbia, which with a few exceptions was no class at all. Each thought that, if the King was to marry a subject, she ought to have been the chosen bride. The spite was very venomous. I remember at a picnic the daughter of a minister, seeing me eat off a plate adorned with the Queen's portrait, said to me, "I wonder you are not afraid of being poisoned."

When Queen Draga gave me an audience she embarrassed me by asking what people I knew at Belgrade. I could only mention one family, for all the others were bitter foes. The mass of the peasantry, however, loved Draga for her geniality and generosity.

I append facsimiles of a letter which she wrote me when she was Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Nathalie.

8 Feb 96

Sir,

Her Majesty, Queen Nathalie of Serbia, bids me convey to you her best thanks for your kind wishes on her birthday greeting with which her Majesty was deeply touched. Please accept my kind regards and be assured that I am overjoyed at your sympathetic judgement of our beloved country.

DRAGA MASCHINI.

*Lady-in-Waiting to H.M. Queen Nathalie of Serbia.*

Peter Karageorgevitch, who was proclaimed King, repeatedly denied that he had been privy to the crime; but I have been shown a document, which he signed at Geneva some days beforehand, promising not only that none of the conspirators should be punished, but that they should



be actually rewarded. Some received as much as thirty thousand pieces of Servian silver. All were promoted or given high offices and wore a special cross to show they were regicides.

Peter had long been a hopeless drunkard and was haunted by visions of the crime until the day of his death. There was no peace for Zimri. I had opportunities of verifying Peter's drunken reputation at Geneva, where he spent a great part of his exile. I found a miserable little coffee-house where he used to spend all his afternoons and evenings over his cups. There I was told that, just before the murders, he was in a great state of excitement, receiving sheafs of telegrams every few minutes as well as all sorts of strange oriental visitors.

He was a poor creature and submitted to snubs from everybody. Ferdinand of Bulgaria used to treat him with the utmost contempt. Whenever Ferdinand passed through Servia on his way home, Peter had to attend in the train and escort him from Belgrade all the way to the frontier at Pirot.

Ferdinand would point to Peter's decoration and ask, "What on earth is that?"

PETER: "That is the Grand Cross of the Order of Karageorge."

FERDINAND: "Oh! is it? I suppose you conferred it on yourself because nobody would give you anything else."

Peter's eldest son, George, was deranged in his mind. He used to try to drown his tutors and amused himself by shooting at passing peasants from the palace windows. Eventually the scandals became so great that he had to be passed over in favor of his brother, Alexander, the present occupant of the throne. For a long time he lived in Paris and has had frequent scandals about women, some of which have brought him into contact with the

police. On one occasion the police ordered him to absent himself from the capital for two months. But in the autumn of 1922 he humbled himself to his brother and was allowed to return to Belgrade.

Edward VII. broke off diplomatic relations with Servia to mark his disapproval of the crime; but Sir Edward Grey insisted on renewing them, despite the fact that our representatives would thereby be brought into contact with murderers, and be expected to shake blood-stained hands. I kept up a campaign in press and Parliament against this. In answer to one of my articles, the Servian Press Bureau telegraphed that all my charges were unfounded; and the editor was invited to send out an investigator, who would be received at Belgrade with "the well-known Servian hospitality." I drew up the reply pointing out that Servian hospitality might be expected to include something unpleasant in my coffee; but that I was willing to go out and inquire into "the sobriety of Peter Karagevitch and the sanity of his son," provided always that the Servian government first lodged £20,000 in a bank for the benefit of my widow. I promised myself some amusement in the course of my inquiry, especially in testing Peter's sobriety, but oddly enough we heard no more.

Later on, however, when I persisted in my campaign, a Servian commissary offered me my choice of being murdered or else of ceasing my attacks and receiving £5,000. I answered this by sending the press a letter entitled, "Reasons Why I Ought to Be Assassinated." One reason was that my demise would restore amicable relations between England and Servia. No repudiation came from the Servian Government.

All sorts of refugees used to visit me in England. One of them, Captain Milan Novakovitch, a very engaging

young officer, had been running an anti-regicide paper which the Government suppressed. Everybody advised him to keep out of harm's way, but he declared he would continue the campaign if it cost him his life. And it did. No sooner did he return than he was arrested on the trumpety charge of stealing one of the screws out of his own printing press. A few days later he was sandbagged to death in his dungeon. And his jailer was summoned to the palace to receive a decoration from Peter. My friend left a young widow, who was expecting a baby.

In 1907, there was a movement to offer the Crown of Servia to Prince Arthur of Connaught; and I supplied conspirators with some thousands of his photographs. But either they failed to please, or the Prince had no ambitions in that direction, for nothing further happened.

It is not generally known that Peter died on the anniversary of the murder of his predecessor. Fearing that this would be considered a bad omen, the authorities kept his death from the public for three days. When he lay in state his face was absolutely black.

It would be interesting to trace the careers of all the other regicides. At least one brute, Mashin, died in his bed, if not in the odor of sanctity. Many fell with undeserved honor in the war. Mishitch, one of the ring-leaders, became Commander-in-Chief. Dimitrievitch suffered tardy retribution. His politics were unwelcome to his government; so a charge was trumped up against him of conspiring against the life of Alexander Karageorgevitch, and he was shot at Salonica. Kostitch, a red-faced, apoplectic looking butcher, was quartered at a rest camp near Winchester and entertained with a party by Alexander Devine. This party included a number of Croats, who had been fighting against their lawful sovereign, the Emperor of Austria; and each of them carried in his

breast pocket a small bottle of cyanide of potassium, intending to poison themselves rather than fall into the hands of their foes. When the whole party had signed the visitors' book, Kostitch's name seemed vaguely familiar to Devine, so he looked him up. To his disgust he found it was Kostitch who had mutilated the Queen's body. Imagine the horror of having shaken hands and broken bread with such a bloody wretch! Devine said to me, "I told him off properly."

The only regicide I met was Gentchitch, years before, at a picnic near Nish. He was the only civilian at the massacre, the only man there who was not drunk. I remember him as an oily bearded youth, who thought himself beautiful. He lay on his back in the woods and discoursed on his own merits:

"Have you ever seen such a wonderful race as the Servians? Look at me. I am a peasant's son and proud of the fact. I was brought up on a dunghill in the society of pigs. Yet I speak three languages fluently; as you see my French would pass muster in Paris; I can hold my own with any lawyer or statesman in Europe. I do not wish to boast, but surely a people that can produce such men must look forward to a tremendous future."

He was made Minister of Justice in Peter's first government. Years after he sent up his card to an Englishman at the Grand Hotel at Belgrade and it was returned to him torn in two.

The Slavs certainly have a strange mentality. In 1920, a party of young Servians were taken to see Oxford and Cambridge. They were deeply impressed by the beauty of the buildings, but shocked beyond measure when they saw young men in shorts going off to play football. "Bogami!" (By God!) they exclaimed. "But these are

grown men. How can they demean themselves to such childish things.

One of my chief surprises was to find Chedo Mijatovitch writing panegyrics to the press on the death of Peter. The man had owed everything—money, position, career—to the House of Obrenovitch and had always professed intense fidelity. He has long been a familiar figure on the outskirts of London society with his patriarchal beard and pretensions to magic. He told me a long story about an old seer, who ran about the streets of Uzhitse on the day of the murder of Prince Michael, wringing his hands and lamenting the death of his sovereign. Nobody took much notice for cranks are common even in Servia, but when news came that the Prince had really been stabbed, the police became interested. Such knowledge was suspicious. The man knew too much and might be in league with the conspirators. He was brought before Milan, who succeeded Michael on the throne, and he proceeded to reel forth a synopsis of the future history of Servia—the abdication of Milan, the assassination of Alexander, the accession of Karageorgevitch, the Austrian occupation, and—what still remains in the limbo of the future—the restoration of the old line.

Mijatovitch called on me in Paris in 1897 and told me King Milan had sent for him to offer him the premiership. Mme. Mijatovitch, mistrusting the temptations of Paris, had ordered him to return speedily. To make assurance more sure, she had not allowed him to take more than one clean shirt, a somewhat futile precaution in the case of a Servian statesman.

He told me a story illustrating the vivacity of Queen Nathalie's temper. One day he was sitting next to King Milan at a royal dinner, when she called across the whole length of the table,



"Monsieur Mijatovitch, I pity you from the bottom of my heart."

"I beg your Majesty's pardon, but why?"

"To be condemned to sit beside such a vulgar boor as King Milan."

What a nice way of making a party go off well! But I suspect Mijatovitch of exaggeration, for Milan was far from a boor. He was reckless, immoral, dishonest, despotic, what you will, but a very engaging companion. As to his dishonesty, I heard that he owned the buildings of the Grand Hotel at Belgrade and pledged them for their full value to a bank. Then, the next time he needed money, he calmly pledged them over again to the Czar of Russia; who was not very happy when he found his security was worthless.

Once, when politicians were more than usually troublesome, Milan determined to suspend the Servian constitutions. But first he thought it prudent to consult Gambetta, who was then acting as his mentor. The reply was, "I am unable to advise you, for I do not know the temperament of the Servian people."

Queen Nathalie was beautiful in a violent Latin way and I praised her charms enthusiastically. At my first audience, she told me it was very embarrassing to meet me after all the pretty things I had said about her. Later on, Mlle Oreshkovitch, her Lady-in-Waiting, sent me a card "by command of Her Majesty" inviting me to "take a cup of tea" on the morrow at ten o'clock at the Villa Sachino, near Biarritz. Sacha, as everybody knows, is the diminutive of Alexander, and Sachino was a further diminutive invented to proclaim Nathalie's devotion to her beloved son.

Being accustomed to Balkan habits of early interviews, I was doubtful whether the invitation meant ten in the

morning for tea and talk, or ten at night for a *thé dansant*, which is a French society phrase for a ball. A telephone call to Mlle Oreshkovitch elicited the fact that the ball was the thing. So at ten o'clock I formed one of the Court circle, waiting for the Queen to walk round. She was not announced in any way, merely strolling in and talking to each in turn. When she came to me, she surveyed me with scorn and said disagreeably:

"I hear we nearly had a visit from you at ten in the morning. Did you think you were being asked to breakfast? Have you never heard of a *thé*? *Un thé! un thé! un thé!*"

She was moving on, full of impatience at my stupidity, when I disarmed her by telling of an American lady who sent out invitations to all her friends in Rome for a cup of tea. Five o'clock, six o'clock passed and no one came. Then at ten, when she was snoozing in her slippers by the fire, forty people suddenly arrived in full evening dress, imagining they had been asked to a dance.

There was a certain amount of etiquette about not sitting down at the Villa Sachino. One or two old Spanish ladies were specially privileged, but if anyone took a seat beside them the Queen would look round severely and, if that had no effect, she would walk across and wait for them to rise. Most of the guests, however, seemed on familiar terms, and were allowed to say whatever they liked to her.

She pounced suddenly upon me and asked, "Don't you dance?"

"Only the *kolo*, ma'am."

That is the Servian national dance, the whole party taking hands and gyrating in a long chain.

"The *kolo*! What an excellent idea! We will have a

*kolo*. Everybody can dance the *kolo*, even Mr. 'X,' who does not dance."

It proved a great success with its vigorous leaps and mystical old-world tunes.

An interesting but little known fact about the Servo-Bulgarian war of 1885 was the simultaneous flight of the two sovereigns. Prince Alexander of Battenberg galloping back headlong to Sofia and King Milan towards Belgrade, each under the impression that his army was routed. A coward in the field, Milan aspired to be a universal conqueror in the boudoir. After many scandalous intrigues, his eyes suddenly fell upon Nathalie, the lovely daughter of Colonel Keshko, a Russian owning vast estates in Bessarabia. She was home for a holiday from a school at Odessa when they met, and even then, at the age of sixteen, her marvelous beauty had already been rumored far and near. Rarely have so many charms been concentrated in one single person. Beside her striking features, her dark limpid eyes and her exquisite figure, she possessed grace, sympathy, wit, wisdom, dignity, sweetness and goodness to a transcendant degree. She had been brought up with considerable simplicity for the daughter of an important territorial magnate, and in character she presented a great contrast to her destined husband. Impulsiveness was their only common trait. Milan was then what most women would consider good looking. Sturdy without being muscular, boastful without being brave, his conspicuous self-satisfaction often imposed upon shrewd observers for a while. The fair Nathalie captivated him at once, body and soul, and he determined to seek her hand in marriage.

To herself it must have seemed a question of destiny. According to old Mijatovitch, an exponent of the black art, she was taken to a fortune-teller when quite a young

girl. The verdict was: "I see a throne. You will be queen. But misfortune will overtake you. You will be driven into exile. I cannot see very clearly the cause of your misfortunes but they seem to be connected with wood. I can see great yards in some oriental city and they are filled with endless stacks of timber."

Queen Nathalie paid little attention to the prophecy until Milan came across her path and offered her a throne. If she believed the gypsy's tale, it must have been with many misgivings that she obeyed her father and accepted her fate. A courtier with whom she discussed the question in early days of her married life thought the allusion was to the woods of Topchider, where Prince Michael was murdered. Milan was of his opinion and for a long time he refused to let his wife go there. It was known to be his wish that she should never in any circumstances visit Topchider.

One day a fancy took Nathalie to disobey orders and run the risk. When she set out she noticed a look of alarm among her courtiers, but she put it down to the prophecy and smilingly asked her lady-in-waiting whether masked men would spring out from the trees and shoot them. "In any case," she remarked, with a touch of oriental fatalism, "what must be, must be. If disaster is to overtake me at Topchider, I cannot avoid my doom." During the drive she espied Milan walking about the park in affectionate intimacy with a lady. She stopped her carriage and there ensued a violent scene which was the beginning of the estrangement between Milan and Nathalie. But as it turned out, the prophecy had been fulfilled even more literally, also. The lady in question, whose relations with Milan had for months had been the talk of Belgrade, was a certain Mme Christitch, the daughter of a Levantine merchant, who owned vast tim-

ber yards at Constantinople. So the mischief was derived from timber yards and came to a head in the woods of Topchider—the prophecy of the gypsy was doubly justified.

After this scene Nathalie held herself aloof from her husband and their relations became increasingly strained. Mme Christitch was elderly and ugly, but she possessed a strange fascination which has been ascribed to hypnotic powers. It is certain that she could make Milan do whatever she pleased, and many were of opinion that she was in the pay of a foreign Government. She certainly did her utmost to humiliate her lover and render him ridiculous. At all hours of the day he had to walk to her house with gigantic bouquets in his hand; or again she would detain and compel him to keep a royal carriage stationed outside her door throughout the afternoon. There was no limit to the gossip about the extravagances which she exacted.

At last a climax came at midnight on Easter morning, 1888, in the cathedral. According to eastern custom courtiers filed up to the sovereigns to exchange the salutations, "Christ is risen"—"He is risen indeed"; and to receive the kiss of peace—the men from the king, the women from the Queen. With astounding effrontery, Mme Christitch presented herself to be kissed by the Queen, giggling to her friends and reveling in the sensation she occasioned. Naturally enough, the Queen ignored her. Mme Christitch turned to Milan, fixing him with her protruding eyes. He had been looking on with cynical mirth but instantly drew himself up to attention like a private reprimanded by his colonel. Seizing the Queen roughly by the arm, he shouted to her, "Kiss Mme Christitch at once. I order you." The Queen grew slightly pale, but withdrew herself with dignity, turning



to the next lady awaiting the paschal greeting. For a moment Milan seemed abashed, but the eyes of his mistress were still fixed coldly upon him. He shook himself into a fury, rushed at the Queen and would have strangled her if several officers had not intervened and pulled him back. The congregation broke up in confusion and excited groups filled the dark streets, discussing the painful incident as they made their ways home. Mme Christitch took Milan's arm and they left the cathedral together.

In the spring of 1888, Nathalie was allowed to take her small son Alexander to Florence, and this was probably the happiest period of her troubled life. My friend Steva Popovitch was minister in attendance. He told me how somebody asked him in the Queen's presence how old the child was and he answered, "Twelve." "Indeed, he is not," the Queen protested with animation, "he is only eleven." "Well," the minister replied good-humoredly, "he will be twelve in August and that is not far off." "You seem to think it is all the same if he is eleven or twelve," she retorted impatiently; "I suppose it does seem the same to a man, but I assure you it does not seem the same to a mother. He is already growing up much too fast."

The following stories were related to me by Mijatovitch. One day when Milan was addressing the Skupsh-tina on a solemn occasion, the little Crown Prince came up to Mijatovitch and whispered, "Tell papa he talks too much. I want him." Another time when the boy went by river to Shabats, the crowds upon the landing stage greeted him with great enthusiasm. Mijatovitch took him in his arms and the cheering was redoubled. Alexander inquired why the people made so much noise when they saw him, and was told, "Because they love

you." At once he called out to the people, "They say you love me. If that is true, prove it to me by throwing your hats into the water." In an instant a hail of hats darkened the air and was carried off by the waters of the Save.

When I first roamed about the Balkans I always made a point of inciting everybody I met to talk about brigands, because I was generally sure of hearing something exciting; but it never occurred to me to take the matter very seriously. The Balkans are still mediæval and I felt that brigands were appropriate to the mediæval setting; it was like meeting the ghost of Sir Walter Scott and extracting fresh tales of a grandfather. But the brigand of real life is a very different person from the brigand of fiction, who distributes the greater part of his booty among the deserving poor, is actuated by the highest spirit of chivalry and earns wide renown by his romantic intrepidity. The real brigand is usually a political refugee, whose only desire is to be let alone and to steal enough to keep body and soul together; or else a political emissary, who travels about trying to force an unwilling peasantry into revolution. Yet the modern brigand sometimes exhibits traits worthy of Robin Hood or Dick Turpin.

I was shown a man named Jevdjeitch, an apostolic looking person with a smooth face and a thick black beard who had terrorized the borders of Servia and Macedonia for twenty years, finding safety in one country when the police of the other had made his haunts too hot for him. One day he waylaid a merchant who was traveling on horseback to a market town with a thousand ducats (£500), which he intended to invest to the best possible profit. He was then well-to-do, rode a good animal, wore a heavy gold chain, was accompanied by several servants and had every appearance of prosperity. Now Jevdje-

itch was reputed a kind-hearted man. His largesse made every peasant of his district devoted to him, and with a certain airy vanity he boasted that he usually left the district better off than he found it. The merchant submitted with fairly good grace to be despoiled of his ducats and watch, and was dismissed with perfect courtesy.

Ten years later he was traveling the same way when Jevdjevitch stopped him again.

"I seem to know your face," said the brigand not unkindly.

"Would to heaven that I did not know yours," was the reply. "Ever since you stopped me and took my thousand ducats ten years ago, things have gone ill with me. It was the turning point of my career. The loss of that money ruined my business. I was soon unable to meet my obligations. And now I am merely the hireling of another merchant. As you can easily see for yourself, I have gone far down in the world."

Jevdjevitch looked at him and believed his story, for the man now rode a donkey, wore rough clothing and had every appearance of poverty. "How much money have you in your purse?" was the inquiry.

"Only one hundred ducats and they are not mine. If you take them I shall lose my employment and be reduced to starvation."

"Well, will you give me your word of honor to remain where you are until I return? If so, I will spare your hundred ducats."

The man promised and presently the brigand returned with two sacks.

"Here," said he, holding up the first, "are the thousand ducats I took from you ten years ago; and here," holding up the second, "are a thousand more, which I present you as interest. May they help you to rebuild

your fortunes! When you are once more rich you shall again travel here at your peril and I will see if I cannot get back from you the whole sum at compound interest."

Some brigands have a certain sense of humor. My friend Zukitch, who married Queen Nathalie's Lady-in-Waiting, told me an experience of his. When he was Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, he was traveling across country in the west of Servia, attended only by a couple of gendarmes. Arriving at a wayside inn, he called for a cup of coffee and nodded to a dozen rough-looking men who sat at little tables in the great bare kitchen which is the parlor of a Servian inn. But for the fact that they carried an unusual amount of arms, and that none of them rose at the entrance of a gentleman, he might easily have taken them for the ordinary peasants of the locality. As all the tables were occupied, he sat down with one of the group and entered into conversation. He soon saw who they were, not only from their knives and guns and pistols, but from their remarks. Like all Servians, they immediately began to talk politics; and presently they mentioned quite frankly what grievances had induced them to take to the hills. Of course, he was entirely in their power if they chose to carry him off and hold him to ransom, but Servian brigands do not carry off or even rob travelers without premeditation or some definite object. It was evidently a case for diplomacy. And he hoped very sincerely that they did not know who he was, as his capture would have been a serious matter for the Government.

They put very many questions, pumping him as to his occupation in life, and he flattered himself that he evaded them skillfully. Then they made conditional remarks: "If you return to Belgrade"—this sounded ominously like a menace and sent a cold shiver down his back—"if

you return to Belgrade and chance to meet any members of the Government, tell them that the brigands of this district are not such bad fellows after all. . . . If you have any influence with the Foreign Office" (this was painfully warm) "inform the Premier" (who was also Foreign Minister) "that when our grievances are redressed we will make our submission. . . ." Again and again he felt that they must know who he was, but whenever he scanned their faces he found them imperturbable and almost childishly bland. At last the horses were rested and it was time to go. The critical moment had arrived. He was almost sure that they had discovered him, and still more sure that in that case they would detain him as a hostage. He rose and put his hand into his pocket to pay for his refreshment, wondering whether he was to sleep that night under the greenwood tree. One of the men started to his feet, banged the table and shouted, "No, no!"

Alas; his fate was decided; a horrible thought passed through his mind that probably in a few weeks his ears would be cut off. "No, no," the man went on, "we may be brigands, but we are still Servians; and Servians do not allow their guests to pay." My friend felt that he could not help showing his relief and he detected a grim smile in the eyes of his companions. However, there was nothing for it but to submit with a good grace, so he thanked them, said good-bye and made his way to his carriage. Several of them followed him out, and just as he was driving off one of them called after him, "A pleasant journey, Mr. Zukitch; do not forget to say a good word for your hosts."



## CHAPTER XVII

### TURKEY

AFTER Servia I wandered about Macedonia, which was more interesting and probably better governed under the Turks.

"There would be no troubles here," said Lord Percy (now Duke of Northumberland) at Uskub, "if there were no Christians." And I agreed with him in forming a low opinion of the whining, cowardly population, whose lives seemed to be divided between outrages and lamentations. But I am inclined to add that they would soon have settled down if there had been no meddling Europeans preaching discontent in every village.

Almost every government pursued an active propaganda, lavished bribes, cooked statistics, stimulated criminal conspiracies. The Austrians, seeking expansion to Salonica, played their game by using Catholic missions as their cat's paws. The Russians backed up Servian intrigues in a similar spirit. The Bulgarians were fighting the Russians and Servians. Then there were Greek agents and even Roumanian agents, who indorsed the aspirations of a handful of Kutzo-Wallachs.

Worse still, there were crowds of honest fools, indulging in what Disraeli called, "the unconscious machinations of stupidity." Item: the three tailors of Tooley Street, who called themselves the Balkan Committee, which I renamed the Buxton Committee. They believed everything they were told so long as it helped the intrigues of Bulgaria, and they had contrived to catch the long-ear

of the anti-British press in Great Britain. Item: American missionaries using clumsy jesuitry for a Protestant revival. One of the worthiest apostles, a Miss Stone, created an enormous sensation throughout the world when she was carried off by bandits; but everybody believed that her adventure had been deliberately organized by propaganda.

Uskub (or Skoplje, in Slav) was the metropolis of all these intrigues; and I spent a very instructive fortnight there at the magnificent house of my friend Kurtavitch, the Servian Consul-General. He did his propaganda on a lordly scale, fed me on excellent champagne at every meal, a lubricant for the masses of dry statistics I was expected to digest. On my wedding day he had sent me forty-eight long telegrams of congratulations from "Jockey Clubs," which he controlled all over Servia, and the barbarous Slav words must have created a fine sensation at the English post office.

The British Consul, a humble little man who occupied a couple of attics with his wife at the Turkish khan, was wrathful at my avoidance of his aegis; and, when I left Uskub, he was the only one of the foreign colony who did not come to the station to see me off. He was specially annoyed by my accompanying Kurtavitch to call on the Vali, with whom he was on strained relations.

A visit to a Turkish provincial governor was a striking, old-world experience in those days. We drove in state to his palace with a retinue of kavasses in resplendent uniforms. The courtyard was lined with the barred windows of a prison, rusty and cobwebbed with infinite age, and I espied the gaunt faces of jail-birds, chiefly brigands, peering out in curiosity. Relays of rather ragged officers, all armed to the teeth, passed us up broad, rickety stairs, along dark corridors into the pres-

ence of the Vali, who rose from a chintz throne in a big bare hall. Kurtavitch and I were given thrones facing him and coffee was brought. The whole conversation consisted of elaborate meaningless compliments, which had to be translated to and from Turkish, though the Vali understood French perfectly. He asked for my impressions of Uskub and I dwelt on the beauty of her verdant river banks, the picturesque outline of cypresses and minarets. . . .

"It is your good heart, which says that," his Excellency replied.

I praised the beneficence of Turkish rule and the wisdom of the Padishah, recalled the ancient alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain.

"It is your good heart which says that," he repeated. "If we were ever tempted to forget Britain the graves of your soldiers at Scutari are an ever present reminder." (What a difference from the attitude of the Angora Government in 1923!)

I asked for a permit to visit Issa Boldenats, an Albanian insurgent then reported to be marching with an army on Uskub.

Even that did not abash my smiling host. I was free to go anywhere and do anything. His only concern was for my safety.

This concern soon proved a nuisance. Whenever I took a carriage and slipped out to explore the neighborhood, the Vali would be quickly informed and an escort of Albanian guards would come cantering in my wake. Not only were they expectant of lavish pay but they were actually a source of the only dangers I had to face. Once after coffee at a hovel of an inn by the wayside, I was strolling into a field when I heard the coachman calling loudly to me to return. On reaching the car-

riage in the road, I saw a scuffle in progress outside the inn. My guards were being disarmed by the landlord and one of them lay helpless in the dust.

"Come on, come on," cried the coachman, green with fear; and as soon as I had taken my seat, he started off at full gallop towards Uskub. After a few minutes we heard our guards clattering after us, pursued by a volley of badly aimed shots. They were roaring with laughter when they caught us up.

"*Chelabieh!*" (Honorable sir) one of them exclaimed. "We owe our lives to you. If we live to be a thousand, our hearts will never cease to beat in gratitude for you."

"What do you mean, you foolish fellow?"

"I will explain to your illustrious Lordship. This is not the first time that we have traveled this way. On a previous occasion we obtained a little fodder for our horses and we forgot to pay the few miserable piastres which that son of a dog had attempted to extort from us. May jackals defile his mother's grave! This time he recognized us and had the effrontery to demand his filthy coins. We told him with great truth that we were poor men without so much as a piastre between us. The infidel pig refused to believe and from words we came to blows. By a treacherous trick he disarmed us and held us at his mercy. He was about to slit our throats when I told him that you were the son of the Sultan of England, and that if he touched a hair of our heads a fearful retribution would follow, the destruction of the whole vilayet by fire and sword. Then the fear of Allah entered his heart and he permitted us to depart. So you see, *chelabieh*, that we owe our lives to you."

"But why did you not pay? Did you not know that you were risking my life and that of the coachman as well as your own for the sake of a paltry farthing?"

"Pardon us, *effendim*" (District governor). "Visit not your wrath upon your servants. We Albanians are not children of peace. Indeed, we love a fight. If it is not about a farthing, it is about a dog."

On another occasion I assisted at the capture of a brigand. In the neighborhood of Kalkandele (Slav Tetovo) I met the *kaimakam* of the place. We lunched together under a tree and he flouted his religion by accepting my invitation to drink the health of Sultan Abdul Hamid in plum-brandy. Then he suggested my joining his party and benefiting by the protection of his escort in that turbulent district. We were a goodly cavalcade. His carriage led the way, mine followed, in front and behind and all round us was a swarm of horsemen, bristling with arms. We met large flocks of sheep and oxen on their way to market. Suddenly the *kaimakam* began to take notice, as a more than usually large flock advanced towards us through the fields beside the road. Some soldiers were sent to fetch the innocent looking shepherd who brought up the rear. He stood sullenly beside the *kaimakam's* carriage and gave unsatisfactory answers. He was asked for his passport. He plunged his hand into his bosom and brought forth a revolver. But before he could attempt to use it, a dozen eager hands had knocked it up and snatched it away. His arms were bound behind his back and soldiers were told off to escort him and his flock to Uskub. He proved to be a notorious brigand in the act of carrying off two hundred sheep and forty oxen. Some weeks later at Salonica I recognized his face amid a gang of convicts in clanking chains embarking for penal servitude at Tripoli.

There was usually a merry party at Kurtavitch's house, including a Russian grand duke, whose English consisted



chiefly of the most comical Victorian slang, and Mashkoff, the Russian consul, who had consumed forty lemons a day for many years, with the consequence that his skin might have passed for a baby's. His two predecessors had been murdered by Albanians and he expected to share their fate. The merriest of all was the Servian Bishop Firmilian, an ardent disciple of Bacchus. He told me that he had been received by Victoria at Windsor and had asked her what was the secret of England's greatness—such a likely opening for a conversation!—and her answer was to point to an open Bible. I commented on the fact that the same story had been told of Queen Elizabeth.

Miss Durham had been a recent visitor. She had come to the consulate and drawn a picture of a horse, or what was intended for a horse, on her visiting card; Kurtavitch hesitated between a goat and cold chicken, but finally produced a horse. Then she drew a saddle and bridle and succeeded in securing a ride. At that time she knew no Servian, but later on she became one of the stormy petrels of the Balkans, receiving decorations for services to Servia and Montenegro. When the great war broke out, she sympathized so much with the Germans that she returned her Orders and took up the cause of the Albanians; who came to regard her as a kind of uncrowned Queen. She is one of the most manly old women in Europe and has been of considerable service to her protégés in their raids on coveted corn.

When she arrived in Albania she let out that she had a private income of £20 a year. The result was that she received twenty proposals of marriage next day. Then, by dint of gossip, the sum was exaggerated to £200 a year; and every conceivable person, chieftains, mer-

chants, officers, farmers, made pilgrimages from the uttermost parts of the country to claim her as a bride.

An acquaintance of mine met her at a dull dinner-party in London. The gloom became more and more oppressive every moment and she began to sigh for the mountain fastnesses of her adopted land. Suddenly an inspiration came to her for enlivening the proceedings. She whispered to her neighbor, "Give me your pumps, quick!" The man opposite was a gray-bearded professor who had a habit of staring with his mouth wide open. Now he opened it so that you could see right down his throat, for he looked up and saw a pair of patent leather shoes confronting him over the edge of the tablecloth.

"Dr. Macintosh," cried Miss Durham, with a great show of mock indignation, "will you oblige me by taking your feet off my lap?"

From Uskub I went to Salonika, just missing a great earthquake. I seem to be the opposite of stormy petrels who herald disasters, for I returned there during the war just too late for a great fire. I talked with a *mullah* (Mohammedan priest) in one of the chief mosques and he described his sensations when the walls were rocking and the floor heaved beneath his feet.

"But I felt no fear," he said simply, "for I knew that Allah and his holy Prophet were watching over me."

In those days, ninety per cent of the population were Jews of Spanish origin. They dominated everything so completely that, if you had your pocket picked, you did not go to the police, but to the Rabbi, who saw that your property was restored on a basis of "no questions asked."

Their newspapers were printed in Spanish with Hebrew characters. The chief paper was run by a man who came to interview me. He told me he did not believe in God

or go to synagogue and that all intelligent Jews were equally "emancipated." The future of Jewry would lie in the liberation of the world from capitalism. He sent me a copy of the "interview," in which I was made to indorse all his opinions and deliver myself of the most surprising statements, including a hope that he would come and spend a week with me in London at the office of a newspaper with which I was connected.

From Salonika I went to Constantinople, where I found O'Connor (now Sir Nicholas) installed as British Ambassador. Foolish people were talking about his meanness, and one man told me of a visit to the Embassy, where he found O'Connor seated at an immense table carefully counting the contents of a match-box he had bought in the streets. "What rogues these Turks are!" he exclaimed. "This box is supposed to contain one hundred matches and I can find only ninety-seven."

Personally, I found him invariably hospitable. He asked me to lunch at Therapia and to dinner at the Pera Embassy. He began by inquiring about my journeys in Macedonia and smiled over my conviction that the province was peaceful and orderly. "But," I remonstrated, "I traveled in perfect safety through districts which the newspapers were describing as in a state of open revolt."

O'CONNOR: "A country is always perfectly safe until something disagreeable happens. You may wander about for weeks or months and flatter yourself that all is serene. Then one fine day you find yourself carried off by a band of brigands to the hills and I am put to all manner of trouble and inconvenience to obtain your release before the fellows have cut off your ears. I confess that I do not favor the travels of Englishmen in Turkey. Apart from the risk, there is so very little to be learnt—you hear one story from a Pasha, another from a consul

and a third from a distressed Christian. Everybody perpetually contradicts everybody else. If you want to learn the truth you will do far better to come to me. I am in constant receipt of reports from our consulates all over the Ottoman Empire, so that I am really far better informed here at headquarters than I should be if I spent my time careering about the various vilayets. At the same time I have consequently far more work to do than any other Ambassador, for everywhere else the Consuls report directly to the Foreign Office, whereas here in Turkey they report to me."

MYSELF (with mischievous intent): "But of all the embassies yours must be the most agreeable and the most interesting. To have frequent intercourse with so great a sovereign and so great a statesman as the Sultan must indeed be a privilege. What industry, what patriotism, what a marvelous devotion to the best interests of his subjects!"

Sir Nicholas looked up sharply and I could detect the shadow of a smile in his Irish eyes. He said nothing, but folded his hands as though awaiting the end of my tirade with resignation.

"Is not Abdul Hamid," I continued, "the most marvelous monarch you have ever known? Have you not conceived the most intense admiration for his person and character?"

O'CONOR (rising as though to bring this indiscreet conversation to a close): "I suppose I must, since I am accredited to him."

"Yes, so was Lord Currie."

A slight groan escaped his lips as he turned away to smile. "Now," said he, "let us go into luncheon."

A few weeks later at the Embassy, when we had withdrawn from the dining-room, he came running across the

saloon with a silver box of cigarettes in his hand. I observed a broad smile on his face, but failed to understand what he would be at when he exclaimed in a loud voice with every appearance of merriment: "I beg of you to accept one of these cigarettes. They are Servian and I find them the best in the world. I always smoke them myself."

I accepted his offer, but was at a loss to explain his hilarity, which seemed excessive if he only intended the compliment of reminding me that he knew of my many travels in Servia. Then he proceeded to repeat his sentence all over again in mock heroic tones.

As I gaped at him with bewilderment, "Ah!" said he, "I see that you are innocent." Then turning to the company he explained in the French language, which he spoke very correctly, though with a fine Hibernian flavor: "I have to-day received a parcel of newspapers from Belgrade. In every one of them I read that this gentleman, the great friend of the Servian people, did me the honor of visiting me at Therapia, where I said to him, '*Je vous engage à fumer une de ces cigarettes*' (I advise you to smoke one of these cigarettes). They are Servian and I find them the best in the world. I always smoke them myself. But I see that he knows nothing about it."

The facts were that after my visit to Therapia I chanced to be writing to a friend at Belgrade and, thinking to please him, I mentioned the Ambassador's preference for Servian cigarettes. Thereupon, the fellow in an outburst of patriotism rushed into print with the story. I hastened to explain this with contrition to Sir Nicholas, who assured me very pleasantly that it was of no consequence.

However, he kept a shaft in reserve for me. "Travel in Asia Minor," he advised, "you will not find it uncom-



fortable. I know many travelers who have enjoyed it, so I am not speaking merely from my own experience; which might not be worth much, for the authorities gave me special facilities, and I traveled almost as luxuriously as you do when you explore the Balkan States!"

This was a gentle hit at the magnificence with which I had been treated during my travels in the interior of Servia. Presently he grew reminiscent on the subject of his residence in Bulgaria during the troublous times which preceded the recognition of Ferdinand. "I know you have a great admiration for Ferdy," said he. "I always admire enthusiasm, in whatever direction it may go. I forget whether you met the unfortunate Stambouloff?"

"Yes, there was a man who obtained the impulsive admiration of Englishmen without doing anything to deserve it. If ever anyone deserved to be murdered surely it was that wretch who made it a practice to torture his political opponents in boiling oil."

O'CONOR (smiling): "Here is Mr. Beaman, who is an ardent partisan of Stambouloff. It will be amusing if we can set you two to thresh the matter out."

Beaman was not unwilling, but a certain embarrassment in the presence of His Excellency restrained him from expressing himself with so much freedom as he might otherwise have imparted to his language.

O'Conor watched us with a quizzical expression during the space of some minutes. Then he said: "I remember once giving Ferdy rather a shock. He had told me on a former occasion that Stambouloff was plotting against his life. I now observed that I had just come from visiting that gentleman. '*Et que dit de moi Monsieur Stambouloff?*' (What does M. Stambouloff say about me?), Ferdy asked as he usually did about anyone

who might be mentioned. 'Well,' I replied as innocently as possible, 'I told him that you thought he was conspiring to kill your Royal Highness.' 'What!' he almost screamed, 'you did not tell him that!' 'Yes,' I replied, 'and his comment was that he would as soon think of conspiring to kill his own children, adding that it was he who had placed your Royal Highness upon the throne.' "

Once he remarked, "I wonder, with all your cranks, you have never thought of turning Mohammedan." At this I looked very prim and said I was a Catholic, which abashed him. I find Romans usually resent this pretension from Anglicans.

At any rate, he was a great improvement on Lord Currie, who terrorized not only the Sultan but nearly every British traveler. I met a man who went to him about some affair and was received very badly.

"You do not seem to be aware who I am," was the retort.

"No, who the devil are you?"

"I would have you know that I am a British tax-payer, one of the people who pay your salary."

It is not recorded what Currie answered.

Before he was appointed to Constantinople, he went to see Victoria, who said very sternly:

"Lord Currie, I hear that you intend to be married before you go to Turkey."

Currie grew very red, and stammered: "I am very sorry, but Your Majesty has been misinformed. I am not contemplating matrimony. The idea has never entered my head."

Victoria fixed him with her stoniest stare and there was a long silence. At last she broke it, repeating inexorably,

"Lord Currie, you intend to be married before you go to Turkey."

And married he was.

What always interested me most in Constantinople was the canine population. Owning no masters, dogs inhabited the streets, where they had organized themselves far more satisfactorily than many human corporations. They were divided into little districts of their own, part of a street or square with an invisible boundary, usually a dozen or a score of them to a district. Their rules forbade them to leave their districts except for special purposes, such as marriage; and then only after receiving formal permission from the head dog, (known as Capitan Pasha) of a contiguous district. Visits were very formal. Two dogs would advance to the frontier to receive their guest. He would walk between them, remembering that he was admitted only on suffrance and must not raise his head or tail, or look to the right or left until his return, when he was escorted back in the same formal way.

I used to carry food for the dogs whenever I walked abroad and sometimes unwittingly enticed them over their boundaries. Here they would hesitate, but if they were hungry, or wanted scraps for their puppies, they sometimes took risks. Then they would be attacked by the guardians of the threshold and sent back yelping.

Once in the *Grande rue de Pera* a bitch came and rubbed her nose piteously in my hand. There was a puppy on the line, a tramcar was coming, and she was unable to extricate her offspring. I rescued it just in time and she never forgot me. Each time I passed that way she would leap out of her box and race up to me, wagging her tail in token of repeated thanks.

Outside my hotel, I taught the dogs to answer to

names I gave them, all except one dog who answered to every name in the hope of securing food intended for others.

Pious Moslems have left money in their wills to provide water troughs, but there were not enough for the whole population in the dog-days. So the dogs established regulations. Queues were formed and a dog was allowed to go on drinking so long as he kept his nose in the water. But if he raised his head, even for a fraction of an instant, back he must go and wait his turn again at the end of the queue. Some dogs were very inconsiderate, keeping their noses well down for an unconscionable time. Then comical scenes occurred. The impatient ones behind would bark at the tops of their voices, announce a dog-fight round the corner, invent all sorts of sensations; and if the animal in possession was silly enough to look up, there would be a paean of exultation as he retired discomfited to the rear.

After the revolution, the "Young Turks" decided that street-dogs were unsuited to a progressive city. But how were they to be suppressed? Public opinion would not have tolerated a massacre, for Turks have always considered it unlucky to kill a dog. So the Committee of Union and Progress decreed transportation to an island, where the wretched creatures were left to die of hunger and thirst. I have heard heartrending descriptions of their piteous end, and many old-fashioned people attribute Turkish disasters to this act of cruelty. However, I hear that free and independent dogs are returned to the streets of the capital after the war. Doghood suffrage is an essential preliminary to a return of the golden age at Stamboul.

Certainly canine politicians are better than most human ones. I have a letter from Labouchere, in which he said,

"I have always understood that Greece is a country inhabited by 'Greeks.' " That is a mistake for dog does not eat dog and Greece has to export her "Greeks." Moreover, the Greeks are too stupid to swindle, in spite of the proverb, "After shaking hands with a Greek, always count your fingers." Their reputation is due to the accident that they all look like stage villains with their Semitic noses, Mephistophelian eyes and moustâches, cynical smiles . . . As a matter of fact Greece is a country inhabited by politicians. Every man, woman and child waltzes in politics from the cradle to the grave.

As an instance of Greek intelligence, I may cite a man called Constantopoulo, who happened to be Prime Minister when I saw him. After talking to me for two hours, he tried to show off his knowledge of old English politics.

"You have had two really good statesmen," he began. "One was Disraeli, and the other——"

"Yes?" I tried to encourage him, but his memory failed.

"Oh! you know whom I mean," he floundered impatiently. "His great opponent, the man who was always attacking him, the champion of Greece——"

"Gladstone?"

"No, no, no. I know all about Gladstone. I mean Lord . . . Lord . . . What on earth was his name? I shall forget my own next. Ah! I have it, Lord Beaconsfield!"

Trikoupis was different. A cold, calculating person with the ways of a minor English statesman. In Greece he was nicknamed, "the Englishman." I saw a good deal of him in Athens during a general election, when the whole country seemed to run about the streets waving emblems and shouting party-cries—olive-branches and "Elea! Elea!" for Trikoupis; blue strings and "Kordoni!



Kordoni!" to show that all his opponents must be returned "in a string." He alone remained perfectly impassive, attending his maiden sister's tea-fights and discussing Jane Austen's novels. The sister was said to have organized all his career for him. Both spoke perfect English and could have passed as English people in any suburban boarding-house.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### SALONICA IN WAR TIME

WHAT a different Salonica I found during the war! The streets were still deep in glutinous mud and the native population was still reinforced by the riff-raff of Eastern Europe; but the general impression was a kaleidoscope of nondescript allies, a music-hall revue of the armies of all nations, with the French aggressively to the fore. They had commandeered the famous White Tower, formerly, like the tower of London, "by many a foul and midnight murder fed," and had established an excellent restaurant and a low music-hall in the grounds.

This music-hall was usually the scene of the most amazing performances I have ever witnessed anywhere. The performers were engaged with the proviso that they should be surprised at nothing. More often than not, they were never allowed to perform at all. Their appearance would be greeted with wild cat-calls, war-whoops, snatches of drunken songs . . . quite irrespective of the merits of the artist. Presently the stage would be stormed and the rest of the turn would be devoted to breakdowns, cancons, tangoes, somersaults, boxing-matches, catch-as-catch-can, and half a dozen songs in simultaneous cacophony from the throats of subalterns or "snotties" of all the Allies. Cabbage-stalks, oranges, chocolates, over-ripe bananas supplied material for a frantic fusillade between stage and boxes and stalls. Then the curtain would go down and a similar pandemonium recurred at the next turn.

I was reminded of a scene at Belgrade in the good old times, when I went to a music-hall with a batch of young officers and under secretaries of State. I was puzzled when they insisted on stopping at a shop on the way in order to buy fireworks. What on earth did we want with fireworks at a music-hall? I was soon initiated. Scarcely had the band begun to strike up when we started to bombard it with squibs and rockets. The musicians hopped about like bears learning to dance on hot bricks. A gypsy fiddler took cover behind a big drum with screams of terror. The bassoon-man leaped into the air like one possessed. The whole orchestra was soon converted into innocuous shambles amid a lurid inferno of colored flames. And the audience seemed quite as much amused as we.

Enemies have accused the French of deliberately causing the great fire of Salonica. I do not believe that charge, but from all accounts they certainly did behave badly after it had broken out. Our men were indefatigable, toiling all night with pumps and buckets, rescuing homeless families in lorries, organizing refuge-camps with food and shelter, earning the undying gratitude of the population. The French, on the other hand, thought of nothing but profit. When their lorries came out, they haggled for ages before they would convey anybody out of the flames. A regular auction would go on at the expense of trembling, half-naked wretches in imminent danger of their lives. And the French secured fabulous loot.

My visit to Salonica came about in this wise. Wandering about Italy during the war and seeking to do a little propaganda for "the smartest of our Allies," as a British colonel called the Italians, at one of my lectures at the front, I chanced to come to Syracuse. There, further progress was delayed by the activity of hostile sub-

marines. One actually came into the harbor and blew up an oilship and retired quite happily. Others were swarming outside like sharks. I noticed an Englishman wearing an unfamiliar uniform in the coffee-room. He knew no Italian, so I constituted myself his interpreter and guide. No, the uniform was not that of the A.S.C. or the R.A.M.C. He was a parson at home and had joined up as a "leader" or bottle-washer of the Y. M. C. A. I discovered that one of this gentleman's duties was to find lectures for the Y. M. C. A.

"What about me? I have lectured all over England and Scotland, been a candidate for Parliament. . . ."

"The very man! Sit down at once and write to Mr. Somebody at the Headquarters in Tottenham Court Road."

And by return of post I was engaged to proceed to the Salonica front. Then my troubles began. I waited a month at Catania because the consul at Rome had not been notified that my passport should be endorsed. I went on to Taormina and was present during a bombardment, when I saw a tramp steamer sunk by a submarine. At last I grew restive and determined to cut red tape. Scialoja, Minister of Propaganda, had promised me films for a lecture on the Italian front. So I telegraphed and received his permission to pass through Taranto. But when I reached that port, I was stopped at the railway station because I lacked an endorsement. All through a long summer's day I was kept in a passage of the police office and refused permission to communicate with the consul or the local leader of the Y.M.C.A. I was only released when a Railway Transport officer espied me through the bars and recalled a lunch at the Café Royal in happier days. But, even so, the Italian Admiral was inexorable. The Minister of Propaganda had had no

right to authorize my coming to Taranto. It was in the zone of the armies and the admiral would have me know that he was supreme there.

Our military police informed me that I must go all the way to Rome for my endorsement and that a free ticket would be provided for me by the night-train. My old friend, the R.T.O., was on the platform to see me off; and, after a stirrup-cup, he introduced a sergeant and said, "This is the man who is going to look after you on the way." When I protested afterwards at the Embassy, I was told that I had not been "in custody" but "under escort," a distinction which I failed to appreciate. The sergeant was very kind, but he had no idea what I had done; for his last job of this kind had been to escort an officer who had been cashiered for drunkenness, and when we reached Rome he had to deliver my body against a formal receipt from the military attaché. At one station I was nearly left behind when I went out to buy cigarettes, and I asked the sergeant what would have happened if he had lost me.

"Seven days in the bird-cage, and probably lost my job as well," he replied.

Over two months passed in Rome before I received my endorsement. Letters and telegrams were exchanged with the War Office until I was told my dossier was at least three feet high. At last I started with the full approval of the Y.M.C.A. headquarters. Imagine my idea of their business habits when I reached Athens and was told that I could not proceed because the Salonica "leader" had telephoned that my engagement was canceled. A military attaché told me that he had half a mind to pack me off home as an undesirable, but he relented so far as to send me to Bralo camp at the foot of Mount Parnassus pending enquiries.



A Rest Camp under the shadow of Mount Parnassus sounded very delightful, but when I first went to one in the course of the war, found that it offered very little rest for anybody. I had half expected to see tired subalterns perambulating in bath-chairs and orderlies running about with grapes and flowers and cups of beef-tea. Instead of which I found everybody marching and countermarching as though the Bulgarians were expected every moment.

"Must keep us busy for fear we should mope," an officer remarked to me, and that seemed the keynote of existence there. "We spend our time digging holes and filling them up again," he went on; but that was an exaggeration, for some of the work was useful; tents had to have ditches dug around them, paths were necessary through the morasses, and our wonderful roads were sorely tried by the ceaseless lorries, while the Greek labor parties did not work very hard without supervision.

"Phew! what a day," Tich the batman groaned, as he buried his nose in a mug of "Ceylon's gift to the nation." Then he lifted his head like a hen after drinking and passed free comments on his officer! "The beggar said he would show us something that would be useful to us for our military service. Miles and miles we went, up a steep mountain, and when we got there, he only wanted to show us the north star, which we could scarcely make out through the mist; but he said it would be useful to us if we ever lost our way. Spoofing us, I call it."

My first impressions, on arriving famished after hours in a rickety train, were not reassuring. A switchback ride to camp in a Ford car, commonly called Tin Lizzie. Then an introduction to the Y.M.C.A. man, who had

arrived that morning and was actively putting up a marquee. I expressed my hunger to him, so he broached a box and bade me help myself to biscuits and chocolate. Then he showed me where to get a tin bowl of lemonade for 2d. at a canteen over the way. Helping with the marquee was rather fun, especially as a wild wind undid most of our labors. Then the C.O. sent word that he hoped I would join the officers' mess. Ha! ha! the glorious vision! Regimental trophies of shining silver, glistening white napery, crowds of soldier-servants moving about silently and offering me all the luxuries of the season amid the popping of champagne corks, officers in smart mess jackets, bowing ceremoniously over their wine and murmuring, "Gentlemen, the King!" The scene is already familiar to us through Ouida's novels.

Yes, but what a young pilgrim's progress to get there! We had not succeeded in unpacking a hurricane lantern, so we needed almost feline wits, as we waded deeply through plowed field, staggered over bowlders, jumped tent-ditches; and were finally entangled in a regular spider's web of marquee ropes—all in pitch darkness and pelting rain. We dived under a flap and gradually distinguished a strange scene:

In the background were officers playing bridge with packing cases for seats and tubs for tables. The dim religious light of candles stuck into tins or bottles gave weird Caravaggio or Mieris effects to their faces amid the cloudy incense of cigarettes, suggesting the ritual of secret societies in the middle ages, or a miner's camp in illustrated fiction. Room was made for us on shaky forms at bare tables. An orderly brushed away previous crumbs and dumped two mugs, one containing very black tea, the other very green soup of unknown ingredients. The rest of the meal consisted of dog-biscuits and Macon-

chie, the well-known stew, which figured as a bad fairy in a pantomime I witnessed near Lake Doiran. This was exceptional fare, the sudden arrival of leave-parties and a breakdown on the railway having imposed half-rations for the time being. Nobody seemed to mind, conversation was fast and merry, someone passed round pickles that his batman had miraculously "won," and a padre was very popular when he appeared with a loaf of shew-bread that a village pope had exchanged for a box of matches.

Then I tried to telephone to Salonica. In a tiny tent were three men and two candles. The operator was the most patient person I have ever seen. In the intervals of connecting camp-dwellers, he kept inquiring wistfully, threateningly or despairing, "Is that you, Salonique?" He must have put that question at least a hundred and fifty times during the hour and a half of my marking time in the puddles on the floor. Sometimes he told us anecdotes; sometimes he broke off into dramatic French in the most British of accents; now and again he informed the receiver that I was an impatient general ringing up on a matter of life and death. But nothing seemed to make any difference. Still he would not let me go. And at last we were rewarded. "Through!" he yelled in incredulous triumph. The receivers were hurried to my ears and I heard my friend's voice, "Is that you, 'X'?" Then we were cut off. Should we try again? I asked. Well, just as I pleased, but there were five exchanges to connect, and it might take rather a long time.

How did he like the camp? I had asked Jeb during an interval. Oh! it was prime, or would be as soon as they had a water supply. At present they had to shave "under exterminating circumstances." Then the rats were a bit of a nuisance, though you could not help

admiring their intelligence. He lost his handkerchief three nights running from beside his bed and could not make it out. So next night he put one under his pillow and was waked up by a rat taking it out. They were so cunning that you never caught a second one in the same trap. One actually gnawed off its own leg in order to escape.

In the camps of Macedonia, with practically no news and sometimes no incidents for weeks, conversation was soon exhausted among men who saw each other every day. Cards were prohibited and other indoor games were rarely available or understood. Officers had their bridge or poker in spite of regulations; but the only form of gambling winked at among the men was "House," a kind of parlor lotto, like that in vogue during our grandparents' childhood and still surviving in Italian households. Almost anywhere in Macedonia after dusk you might hear stentorian voices roaring out numbers in many tents, interrupted by the triumphant cry of "Hou-ou-sie!"—when a victor had secured his quota. It was usually a sergeant who took the bank or "kept house" as it was called. Some twenty players handed him 2d. each as entrance fees and he paid out 3s. to the winner, or he might take as much as 2d. or 3d. in the shilling. As ten games could be played in an hour and "house" was sometimes kept all day, the profits were quite substantial. Indeed, Y.M.C.A. leaders told me they had provided checks in exchange for small coins to the tune of as much as £80 to be remitted by "Housekeepers" to their families at home. After ten days beneath Mt. Parnassus, I was coolly informed that my engagement had never been canceled. Salonica at long last!

"One of the greatest surprises of this war," I began

my first lecture, "after a long and ill-spent life, is to find myself standing before you as a Young Christian."

The Y.M.C.A. people rather resented this nick-name, which spread like wildfire all over the B.S.F. or "British Sedentary Front." Many of the "Young Christians" were not very young, some of them were not very Christian, all of them were acutely sensitive to ridicule. They hated my reference to Allsop in connection with their triangular badge.

For my part, I found some amusement in being mistaken for a parson in consequence of the letters on my shoulder-strap. At one mess I fell into a trap and kept correcting officers who addressed me as "Padre," until I discovered they were pulling my leg. Then one pitch dark night, a tent-rope caught me by the left leg, like Daddy Longlegs, and sent me flying at full length into a foetid mire of Macedonian mud. I gave vent to a volley of the foulest oaths, with which I will not sully these pages. Then a sergeant came to pick me up and asked with mischievous solicitude,

"Have you hurt yourself, *Padre?*!"

I was once actually invited to take a service. Alas! it never came off, but I prepared a sermon on the text, "Be not righteous overmuch." My intention was to counteract the tendency of many padres to denounce swearing as though it were the worst of all the deadly sins. I was going to enumerate all the oaths I knew and point out how harmless they really were, especially "bloody," which is but a synonym for "thorough."

I heard one padre preach a sermon, which ran mine very close. Let me preface it with a reminder that "winning was used in the army instead of the cruder word "stealing."

"Ah, my friends," the preacher exclaimed, "many



things are being won in this war besides battles." Now for a diatribe against dishonesty, I thought to myself. Not a bit of it. "All I have to say is, that, when you have had a bit of luck and have won something particularly worth having, don't be mean about it. Share it with your pals!"

The congregation took the cue and "won" £20 worth of Y.M.C.A. stores while this sermon was in progress.

Warrior bishops in the Middle Ages used to avoid the sin of bloodshed by fighting with clubs instead of swords, and some of our Church militant men must sometimes have envied them. What a strain to go into the thick of a fight and turn the other cheek all the time, living targets, heroes who may capture souls but must not take lives! Padre Gedge was a type of those who ever moved where the fire was hottest carrying wounded men on his back, comforting the dying. "We could see at once that he was done for," I heard from the man who brought him in; "his brains gushed out of his head, and he had become raving mad. I couldn't tell you how many lives he had saved that day."

I found Tommies critical of padres, but on the whole they were just judges of character. A good fellow was idolized, while artificial geniality was detested at once and attempts to patronize were resented. The less a padre mixed with officers, the greater was his hold on the men; for they felt a certain constraint with officers, and wanted him all to themselves. He had to seize every chance of chatting with them but at the same time it was fatal for him to talk condescendingly about "a yarn with the men." He was expected to be obliging in all sorts of unexpected ways, as an amanuensis for instance.

"I wish you'd write to the wife for me, padre," I overheard.

"All right, what shall I tell her?"

"Oh! tell her I'm still on the Lord's side."

This from a notorious reprobate produced much mirth.

On the other hand, those who made themselves cheap were discounted. I heard a newly arrived padre address the men as follows: "I want to help you in every way; I want you to come to me in all your troubles however small. As a minister of the Gospel, I want you to regard me as the servant of all my flock. For instance, if you lose any of your buttons don't hesitate to ask me and I will sew them on for you."

This appeal touched a cord of mischief and next day there appeared an endless queue of hilarious soldiers with breeches in their hands!

Devotion was often displayed by exaggerated efforts to shield a padre from criticism. One of them told me he sent his batman round to the mess to fetch some beer, and the bottle was brought back concealed in a biscuit tin.

"You needn't have done that," the padre said; "I don't mind anybody knowing I have a glass of beer."

"Oh!" was the reply, with a knowing wink; "this is not the first time I have been with a minister."

Sermons were not appreciated unless they were short and cheerful. A padre who dwelt on the perils of battle in order to emphasize the need of instant repentance was the object of general disapproval as a promoter of despondency. The most popular preacher I heard put one foot on the table and leaned his elbow on his knee, discussing all sorts of topics with the utmost frankness.

After the sermon the men were allowed to choose their hymns and one man would persist in making himself tedious by selecting a hymn about heaven which he

kept on shouting out, with the chorus, "I shall be there! I shall be there!" At last the padre grew impatient and retorted, "I'm not so sure about that."

During the war we adopted a number of manners and customs from other people, but we certainly did something towards modifying the tone of the people we visited. I noticed an extravagant instance of this in a Salonica tram. A beefy British captain of the new army, with a face like a Greek sunset, came in and found a lady straphanging, while four fat native men sprawled on the cushions. I could see his British blood boiling as he called them filthy dagoes and ordered them to get up. Not understanding a word, they merely stared, so he seized one by the scruff of the neck and dragged him out of his seat. The three others leaped to their feet in wild alarm and everybody was so much amazed that the conductor forgot to ask Red-Face for his fare. I suggested to him afterwards that perhaps the lady had paid it.

Before I reached Salonica I was given to understand by people who should have known better that our soldiers there were in a state bordering on mutiny, and would lay down their arms any day if their grievances were not speedily redressed. Nothing could be further from the truth, as I can testify, for men talked more frankly with me, a mere lecturer, than they would with officers or young Christian officials. Grievances there were, of course, the chief concerning the delays and scarcity of leave. In one of my lectures I happened to mention how the King of Italy was content to take the ordinary fortnight's leave *like any other soldier*. Scarcely were the words out of my mouth than there was a great roar of laughter; no one would believe that I had not deliberately jested, and many kept telling me afterwards that, "that was a very good one." They could not help regard-

ing their grievance as a joke, though it was at their own expense and therefore rather a bad one. They had certainly understood when they joined up that leave every six months was a condition of service and many of them had not had a day off for three years. One man told me his young children would not know him when he returned, another that his father and mother had died and he was likely to lose his inheritance, another that his business was going to rack and ruin whereas with three weeks at home he could pull it together. The chief scapegoat seemed to be Lord Derby. He was alleged to have said in Parliament that no soldier had been six months without leave unless he had committed crimes or contracted a disgraceful disease. So it appeared hard to respectable men when their wives or sweethearts wrote asking for which of those two reasons leave had been refused; especially as civilians were unaware that "crime" in the army embraced some very trivial offenses. When I told grumblers that the War Office did its best in face of a great shortage of transport, the answer was that the French contrived to get their leave regularly every six months. They also thought it ought to be possible to know a few days in advance whether transport was available or not, whereas the authorities seemed hopelessly bewildered.

Fifty men were sent with all their kit to Salonica station every day for a fortnight, and then brought back again to Summerhill Camp. The usual method, after leave was officially granted, was to make the men up into parties to await their turn, but no proper steps were taken to ascertain about arrangements further on. A party would be sent off from Salonica to Bralo, some twenty hours' journey by train, and then G. H. Q. washed its hands. The party might remain indefinitely at Bralo

awaiting orders in a state of great discomfort. When I was there it was so overcrowded that the men slept twenty and even thirty in a bell-tent, packed away with their boots as pillows and their feet all meeting at the pole in the center. On one occasion water was so short that washing was out of the question for four days. One man went and fetched some water from a stream and removed his grime, with the result that he was confined in the "bird-cage" for seven days. "Seven days for a wash!" his friends exclaimed—though of course the punishment was for disregarding regulations. A major remarked merrily at mess there, "Don't worry: we may be off any year now." The eleventh leave party spent three weeks waiting at Bralo during this congested period and then was sent all the way back to Salonica to continue the game of patience there.

The spirit in which these hardships were taken showed itself at one of the concert parties which I attended. During some of the horse-play, a terrible scarecrow suddenly appeared, as pale as a ghost, holding himself like a jelly, filthy beyond words and with his uniform all in tatters.

"Hallo!" cried the clown, "you seem to have found the way at last. Had a good time?"

"Rather!" was the reply. "The time of my life. I was one of the Eleventh Leave Party."

But the favorite story was about a man who obtained his leave by false pretenses. He told piteous tales of trouble at home, and said he had been in Macedonia for two and a quarter years, with a long previous period in France and never a day off. But while he was in England it was discovered that there was not a word of truth in all this as he had not been nine months in the army. So he was brought up on his return and asked for an



explanation, which he gave with a cheerful grin: "Well, sir, I'm no scholar, and I can't count up time rightly. All I can say is that it seemed much more than two and a quarter years."

One would have imagined that the authorities would possess some record of service, enabling them to verify men's statements. But though we won the war it was not by insistence on business methods. Here is a pitiful instance. Orderlies were granted to the Y. M. C. A. out of a body known as P. B. men. Initials were so lavishly used instead of words that the words themselves often came to be forgotten, and there was soon no certainty about the meaning of P. B. Some said it stood for "Permanent Base," others had another interpretation. In the same way, C. O. was used indifferently for commanding officer and conscientious objector. Anyhow, the P. B. men were temporarily exempted from active service and they welcomed employment by the Y. M. C. A. which did not enforce discipline too severely or give much work to do. One man was very slightly incapacitated and was accordingly lent to the Y. M. C. A. for a very short time. But, no proper register being kept, he was soon forgotten and remained on for many months waxing fat and kicking up his heels. Then some official, happening to go through lists in a desultory hour, noticed various names that could not be accounted for, among them that of the happy orderly. There had been some raid by his regiment and the question arose as to whether he had been killed or taken prisoner. Eventually he was reported as missing and his wife was notified by the War Office. She was seized with panic and unwisely wrote back that she had just received a letter saying that he was an orderly to the Y. M. C. A. Then he was pounced upon and taken back to the firing line.

The awfulness of the Salonica climate has been exaggerated, but it was pretty bad. During the summer, malaria did not spare even the strongest, and it was by no means rare to find seventy or eighty per cent of the regiment laid up at the same time. An officer told me how for over a week he was the only man up and about his battalion. He had to do all the cooking and cleaning for the whole camp himself, and walked miles every day to collect half-rations. If the Bulgarians had known, they could easily have walked in and taken everybody prisoner.

Complaints were allowed by army regulations but were not advisable in practice. A man who sent in a protest about his meat was brought up before the C. O. and sentenced to twelve days for making a frivolous complaint, but when he appealed he heard no more about it. Six men who joined in a complaint about their food received twelve days C. B. for "mutiny." Others remonstrated when they received no potatoes, and the C. O. confronted them with the cook, who said, "Didn't I tell them I couldn't give them potatoes when I hadn't got any?" As a matter of fact he had merely abused them when they came to him. However, they were told they should have their potatoes as they were so anxious about them; and they were sent in their spare time with a wheelbarrow to fetch some five miles away, and they had to peel them for the whole mess on their return.

But it was only the superficial observer who took our soldiers' grumbles seriously. They were like schoolboys in that they regarded everything as either black or rose-colored; once they began to pick holes they tore everything to pieces. A chaplain gave me an instance from a canteen where two Tommies had just entered. One said, "I suppose we'd better have some tea." "Oh! tea!"

the other replied, in the true spirit of a grouser. "If you call for tea at the Y. M. C. A. it's sure to be so bloody hot that you can't drink it."

Grousing was a relief to the feelings and did not amount to discontent at the Salonica front. A soldier said to me after enumerating his grievances about leave, climate, malaria, and so on: "After all, when we do get home I shouldn't at all wonder if in a few weeks we was all wishing ourselves back in Macedonia." Another added, "We're like bears with sore heads at having to dig tent-trenches in a rest camp, but give us ammunition to carry up to the front line and we'd be on it like a bird, even though we had to do it all night under fire." And they were both members of the famous Eleventh Leave Party.

"B. S. F.," said the C. O. at Bralo, explaining how my letters should be directed. Then he added with a chuckle, "British Sedentary Force." That was the unkind attitude adopted everywhere. This first arose because correspondence dwelt exclusively on the rare diversions, a pantomime with scenery imported from London at a cost of £800; merry concert parties with wonderfully made up "girls" of the wrong sex, all excused active service; football, golf, sports—indeed it sounded a regular picnic, and endless round of gayety. Or else the troops were supposed to drift into camps or trenches and remain there from year's end to year's end, growing fat on excellent rations, perusing the latest magazines or gazing at strange cross-bow flights of wild geese. Their letters from home were full of chaff about "cushy jobs" or invitations to "get a move on," and the stings began to hurt. They might have been dreaming away the great campaign.

As a matter of fact, apart from big fights, the casualties in an average battalion were the same in Macedonia

as in France; eighteen days in the line were quite usual as against four in France; indeed, men would vastly have preferred the heavier engagements elsewhere to the general exasperation with scanty prospects of promotion.

And from time to time there were heavy operations. There was a serious disaster at *Petit Couronnè* which was never mentioned by the press. Over 7,000 of our men were beguiled into a ravine and massacred by the Bulgarians. All that the English papers published about this was two lines saying that operations were progressing successfully in Macedonia. The Bulgarians, who were on terms of chaff and good-humor with our troops, secured a copy of this and put it up on the wire entanglements, with the sarcastic inquiry, "Was it really so very successful?"

There was no denying "Johnny Bulgar's" ruthlessness to the Servians and Greeks, whose wounded he burned or buried alive, and whose children's heads he dashed against the stones, as he triumphantly admitted in his war-songs. But he seemed to have a sneaking kindness for the British, perhaps attributable to memories of Gladstone, or some mysterious compatibility of humor. In any case, Tommy voted him a sport and delighted in the interchange of chaff. It soon came to be understood on both sides what would and what would not be tolerated. For instance, the Bulgarians allowed our men to play football between the lines in full view of their batteries and never fired a shot, but so soon as one of our sergeants began drilling there a shell was sent to remind him that he was not playing the game. And elsewhere, when we shelled their men bathing in the sea, they retaliated by destroying our bathing tents. And they seemed to possess a certain sense of gratitude for small courtesies. In a tight corner where the tide of battle fluctuated, some wagons were

occupied alternately day and night by the contending forces.

One morning our men found a notice there, "You might leave the place a bit tidier!" This appealed to the British sense of humor, and as our men had nothing much else to do an hour was devoted to making everything amazingly spick and span. The next message was, "Please give us a few books to read, as we find it very dull waiting here," and some magazines were provided. Then: "We regret that we have only Bulgarian books, so we cannot reciprocate your courtesy. But we have run short of coffee and should be grateful if you could spare some as well as jam." Well, that was cheek, but Tommy rather liked it and he left what provisions he could spare. Indeed, he came to look forward to his daily communication from the enemy as much as he did to his copy of the *Balkan News*. And finally the promised gratitude found expression in a note of warning: "Don't remain a single hour, for we are going to make a raid." The hint was taken and the wagons were blown to pieces that night.

The Bulgarians are engaging in small ways. A friend of mine went out surveying with an escort of a French sergeant-major and four soldiers. The escort surprised four Bulgarians and carried them off. My friend went on surveying and presently met a Bulgarian whom he asked whether he had come to surrender. The man grinned, and said: "No, I came to fetch my flask, which I left on a tree. I hope you've no objection, as I'm thirsty." So they agreed that each should go his way.

"Why didn't you take him?" asked a Frenchman who was listening to this story.

"Because he might have taken me."

"Oh, nonsense. Out with your revolver and 'Hands up' or boum!"



"But I hadn't got a revolver. I'd only got a Theodolite."

This is a trivial anecdote but illustrates the airy indifference on both sides. They might be prize fighters hammering away with a song on their lips. Indeed, during a nocturnal bombardment they often made their guns play mischievous tunes while ours replied with counter-tunes. Once there had been the utmost mystery about the withdrawal of some of our troops and none but the staff were supposed to know anything about it, but on the morning of the move the Bulgarians exhibited a huge blackboard with the inscription in chalk letters: "Good-bye to the 69th."

Another find on the wires was a Bulgarian: "TARIFF OF REWARD: For killing a British private, 1 lev; Non-commissioned officer, 5 lev: Officer up to the rank of Colonel, 10 lev: General, instant death without the formality of a court-martial." (A lev is a Bulgarian franc.) The no-man's land was anything up to two or three miles in breadth, so it was easy to crawl up in the dark to affix notices.

Another time, the Bulgarians sent apologies for having bombarded one of our forts, explaining that they thought it was held by Greeks. Which reminds me of some Saxons who had exchanged courtesies with our men in Flanders, and then put out a notice: "We are to be relieved by Prussians. Give them hell!"

The Bulgarians certainly treated their prisoners well. When they caught one of our surveyors, they sent to ask what we paid him as they wished to give him the same for making a survey of the town of Philippopolis. When they took one of our airmen they usually sent word of his safety, sometimes accompanying the news with a request for a tin of coffee to be dropped from one of our

planes. Once when they captured a man of fifty-five they sent him back with a message that they thought he would be better employed as a non-combatant in his own country. Another version of this incident is that they did not want to have to keep our old age pensioners.

Towards the end there were signs of their growing weariness of the conflict. Their men came over in large numbers to give themselves up, and were employed as road-makers at a good salary. I heard of a sentry so bemused with quinine that some Bulgarians had to dig him in the ribs before they could induce him to wake up and take them prisoners. They often strolled into a camp-kitchen and remained smoking and chatting with the cook until someone came to arrest them. The worst thing our men did to them was to rob them of all their buttons as souvenirs, and they would have presented an indecent appearance if they had not been given string for their trousers. One Bulgarian officer came over with his batman carrying his bag to give themselves up. Prisoners often asked our people to show a red light from a plane over a certain spot as a signal to their friends who were waiting to come over if assured of good treatment.

## CHAPTER XIX

### BACKWASH OF WAR

ON my way home from the war I found trouble once more at Taranto. An Irish captain and I went off to dine in the town without leave, a waiter was rude to us, and I tapped him over the head with my stick. Then we hailed a cab with two youths on the box to take us back to the camp. I did not remember the way very well, but I had an idea that we were going wrong; and presently we drew up outside the great doors of what looked like a garage. One of the youths got down and opened them, we were driven in and they were barred behind us. Lo! we were prisoners in a vast hall, half stable, half doss-house, with horses, mules, oxen, chickens, pigeons and ragged families slumbering all round us. Our horses were solemnly taken out and led away to a stall, leaving us seated in the cab. Then the young rascals came and planted themselves opposite us, lighting cigarettes, with mischievous gleams in their eyes.

The captain made a sound which was half curse, half hiccough, and muttered, "Fancy two old campaigners like ourselves being held up by a couple of kids!"

A glance round the place rather reassured us. The peaceful snores of the families, the innocent children, the farmyard atmosphere, were far from suggesting deeds of violence. But I agreed with the captain that impudence had gone quite far enough and I had no intention of spending the night here. Besides, there might be unpleasantness at the camp, as indeed there was.

"Body of Bacchus! What does this all mean?" I wanted to know.

"It means that we want a hundred lire to take you to the camp."

The captain seemed disposed to take things lying down in peaceful slumber, but I found an array of harness and bridles with sleigh-bell collars on the nails of the wall; and I rattled them until ragged sleepers began to wake and complain. Then I started shouting and pushed the youths about good-humoredly. Their bluff was soon over and we were released; but we knew not where we were and the camp was far away. At last we met two policemen and brought them back to the stable where we found the youths sleeping on mats on the floor.

"Did we want to charge them?"

"Certainly not."

The police advised us to await daylight as we should certainly not find our way. So we persuaded them to make a night of it with us. They tapped at the window of a pot-house and a sleepy head in a tasseled nightcap peered out from an upper window.

"Who is there? What do you want?"

"It is the police."

So the wretched landlord had to open and produce his best wine, which we quaffed to the accompaniment of songs and patriotic speeches until a very red dawn spread its magic over a cobalt sky.

The captain slunk back to the camp and his truancy was never discovered. But I liked the taste of liberty after five months of Young Christian restrictions. After all, I was merely a lecturer wearing uniform like a courtesy title, and there was no chance of a train for many days, so I decided to linger in the town and study the conditions of the people. Next afternoon, however, I

was tapped on the shoulder in the street and a member of our military police said the Assistant Provost-Marshal wanted to speak to me.

When I was taken back to camp, I was made to feel like a runaway schoolboy. Captain Somebody received me and said, "It is very much resented that you should have left the camp without leave." The Commanding Officer kept me waiting for an hour before he would speak to me. Then he reminded me that I was under military discipline. I pleaded that I was a mere camp-follower, but he said a charge had been brought against me of assaulting a waiter.

Eventually the waiter was produced and a solemn inquiry was held with Captain Somebody presiding. The proceedings were farcical. No member of the Court knew any Italian except a sergeant who had been called in as interpreter, but had only a smattering of Ollendorf. I quickly took the whole conduct of the case in my own hands, became counsel for defense and prosecution, judge, jury, interpreter all in one. I was placed between two Young Christians for identification and the waiter recognized me at once. Then I talked with him so fast that the Court had no idea what we were saying. I told him I was sure he did not mean to get me into trouble, that I was an ardent friend of Italy and that I would meet him outside and compensate him. I translated his replies, explaining to the Court that he wanted no compensation, that I had not hurt him in the very least, that the whole business was due to a misunderstanding of some words I had used. . . .

Captain Somebody seemed satisfied but the proceedings had to end somehow. He suggested that I should formally admit the charge. Yes, but what would the consequences be?



"Oh, nothing. We shall merely send in a report to the Y. M. C. A. people in London."

"Very well."

That was that, but the Commanding Officer decided that my absence was more desirable than my company in the camp, so he punished me by sending me off by the next troop-train that very day; a punishment which my fellow-travelers from Salonica would have given their eyes to share as they had to wait at Taranto in the ordinary way.

But the report to the Y. M. C. A. proved no formality. When I went to Paris after the Armistice, I was refused an indorsement to my passport on the ground that there had been "some trouble at Taranto"; and I had to wait a week for the Foreign Office to intervene. I should also have been hindered on my way to Scandinavia in August, 1918, if I had not skipped out unawares. I had omitted to apply for the War Office indorsement and was stopped at Aberdeen for inquiries, but the telegraph service had broken down and I was reluctantly let through.

The journey by troop-train from Taranto to Havre was an odd experience. In normal times one deems a journey of two or three days a bit of a trial, but here was I cooped up for ten days with a thousand Australians. Sometimes we stopped at a rest camp and had a square meal, but usually we were shunted on to sidings for many hours and were restricted to bully beef and luscious peaches out of tins.

The Australian officers proved very good fellows of a primitive type. When they were not relating ribald stories they were singing at the top of their voices. At the first glimmer of daylight they would begin an interminable recitative: "One grasshopper jumped right over another grasshopper's back; two grasshoppers. . . ."

Once they actually went up to a hundred and forty-five grasshoppers. Whenever they espied a petticoat through the windows they sent up wild yells of "Hullo, Lizzie—*Liz-zee*." There was practically no discipline, the privates flatly refusing to obey orders. Whenever we stopped, the officers had to ask, command, advise and strive in vain efforts to keep the men in the train. Sometimes, contempt was displayed by a ceremony known as "counting out." At the passage of an officer a group would cry in unison, "One, two, three . . . ten OUT!" And that was resented as a dire insult against which there was no redress.

For the officers went in fear of their men. On one occasion, a sergeant came to our carriage and complained that a private had foully insulted him. The officers agreed that this was rank mutiny. They talked of putting the man in irons, and having him court-martialed, almost of shooting him at dawn. But each was anxious that one of the others should do the carpeting. At last the lot fell to the senior and it was decided that the man should be brought before him the next time we stopped. Poor judge! He was all nervous and trembling during the next half-hour. The others heartened him and urged him to be severe. He assured us he was determined to make an example, but when the man arrived full of defiance, he was blandly told:

"I say, old chap, I wish you wouldn't make a fuss like this. We're all in this war together. The sergeant's quite upset."

"It was all his fault. . . . He began it and I'm not going to stand his lip—or anybody else's."

"All right, all right. You can go now. But don't do it again."

And the man went off, loudly declaring that he meant to give the sergeant "socks."

I foolishly let out that I spoke Italian and French, with the result that I was commandeered as an honorary interpreter for the whole journey. There was a regular interpreter on the train, but he knew no language except Cockney. At all hours of the day and night I would be routed up to explain some trifle. The chief trouble in Italy was due to the fact that the one lavatory for privates was kept locked up and the key could be obtained only from an Italian doctor who knew no English, so I had to explain symptoms and circumstances.

We were received everywhere in Italy with extraordinary enthusiasm. The Australians might have been conquering heroes instead of raw recruits on their way to be trained. Bottles of wine were swung down to us from upper windows, charming Red Cross ladies lavished luxuries, crowds cheered, children brought fruit and flowers. The mimosa was a special delight for the Australians claimed it as their national flower, under the unpoetical name of wattle. At Ventimiglia, on leaving this hospitable soil, we were entertained in the waiting-room, and as no one else spoke Italian I had to respond to the toast of Australia with many rhapsodies about wattle.

Once on French soil nobody took the faintest notice of us. It was the chilliest welcome I have ever witnessed, and the pleasantries of the Australians were received with stony stares by soldiers and populace. There was no fun in shouting, "Hullo, Lizzie," when maidens grudged even the tribute of a fleeting smile. We realized that we had drawn nearer to the grim area of war.

The French had excellent linguists as liaison officers, but our service of interpreters was lamentably poor. I met a whole crowd of them at Marseilles in 1914 awaiting

the arrival of Indian troops. The "interrupters," as they were nicknamed, were a jovial, dissolute crew, recruited from the most unlikely quarters in the most haphazard way. Scarcely any of them were masters of the most elementary French, and most of them were eventually drafted into fighting units. Owing to the long delay of the Indians, they were at a loose end for about two months and had no duties except to report themselves by writing their names in a book. Most of their time was spent at the Bodega, or taking electric launches to see the German prisoners on Monte Cristo's island at *Château d'If*.

One of the interpreters had been a teetotaler all his life but had a relapse on meeting convivial friends. The result was that he drove about the town with three sirens, firing his revolver in the air. A military policeman persuaded him to return to his hotel, where his condition attracted the attention of a general in the hall.

"What you had better do is to get to bed as quickly as you can and sleep it off," was the indulgent warning.

The interpreter staggered off and undressed. Then he reflected that he was not a schoolboy to be ordered off to bed like that. He was a British soldier, a gallant hero, and he would soon let the general know what was what. A few minutes later he appeared in the hall, where chiefs of the staffs of many nations were solemnly smoking cigars in wicker chairs and discussing affairs of high strategy. Holding a copy of the *Sporting Times* in his right hand, as naked as on the day when he was born, the youth titubated up to the general and waved the paper in his face.

"You shent me to bed," he hiccoughed. "No bishnesh to do that. L-look at the King'sh r-r-regulashonsh!"

For weeks he was confined to his room and at last

something had been found for the interpreters to do. Nearly all my friends had engagements for an hour or so at some time of the day or night, sitting with the prisoner to prevent him from throwing himself out of the window. When his delirium tremens had abated, he was court-martialed and cashiered. He left Marseilles defiantly to join the Foreign Legion, escorted to the station by a bevy of faithful sirens.

Another of my new acquaintances illustrated a strange factor in the psychology of fear. Being too old for an ordinary commission, but anxious to "do his bit," he had volunteered as an interpreter. On reaching Marseilles, however, he grew alarmed at the panoply of war and spent wakeful nights in an agony over his forthcoming transfer to the front. He determined to kill himself in order to make sure that he would not be killed by the Huns! Duggy Campbell (heir to the Dukedom of Argyll) and I took away his revolver and cartridges several times, but he always contrived to find a fresh supply. One wet night I installed myself in his spare bed rather than go back to my hotel and he gave a great start when he entered in the small hours to find me there. Next day he told a party of us at lunch that he had come in fully determined to shoot himself, but that my cheery face and conversation had decided him to give up the design. This led to great chaff and I was hailed as the man who had saved his life. But a few months later, when he obtained leave from the French front, he killed himself with his revolver on the underground railway.

Scandinavia in war-time was festive in a Barmecide way. The natives, imagining that hostilities could only last a few weeks, had sold all their supplies to Germany, so that when we imposed a blockade, they were left with



much money and nothing to buy. The only bread in Sweden was made of wood-pulp, and that was strictly rationed to two small slices a day. I found the British Consul at Haparanda, on the Finnish frontier, in great ecstasy when he had succeeded in securing a bottle of whisky for £8. There were a good many Germans about and I felt innocently surprised that they did not seem ashamed of themselves.

In a restaurant car, when I was drinking hock, one of them leaned over to me and said pleasantly:

"Ach, so! You are Englander and you trink our Tscherman vine!"

"Yes," I replied in the same spirit, "I drink your German wine, I ravish your German women, and I kill your German men."

But I prefer the story of Augustine Birrell, who answered a similar taunt, and said, "Yes, I intern it."

## CHAPTER XX

### ROME IN WAR TIME

HERE are some extracts from my diaries in Rome during the war.

5 March, 1917. Pius X.'s sister Rosa died yesterday and people are recalling his extraordinary sanctity and disinterestedness. Miracles are already attributed to his relics and it is said that no Pope since St. Peter equaled him in holiness. He accumulated no personal property during his Papacy, did not leave a single penny, and his will contained little beyond a request that his successor would allow £12 a month to his sisters during their lives. He did not provide even for his secretaries but they have obtained lucrative posts. His sisters were very unhappy at not being allowed to view his body after his death.

Various stories have been current since Pius X.'s death about miracles worked by his relics, and the slab over his grave at St. Peter's in Rome is daily visited by all sorts of people, who say he is not less potent than St. Anthony of Padua in granting requests. Woods, A. R. A., whom I met at Horatio Brown's house at Venice, told me Pius, when patriarch of Venice, had visited his studio and blessed one of his pictures. Woods did not consider it at all his best work, but an Australian millionaire gave him his own price for it soon after, and it was his first real success, the foundation of his career. His dealer suggested that he should get all his pictures blessed.

Brown said to the Patriarch, "We Scotsmen sometimes

have second sight, and I foresee that Your Eminence will be the next Pope."

The Patriarch laughed at this, but said, if it did come to pass, he should make his Rector a Cardinal, and someone else, whom he mentioned, a Bishop. Both these resolutions were carried out in due course.

8 March. The Baron had an audience of Pope Benedict XV. this morning with twenty-nine others. It was fixed for noon and they were received at half past. The Pope had not a pleasant manner and said very little to anybody. He blessed all medals and other things they might have in their pockets. The Baron was chiefly impressed by a huge emerald ring he wore. Pius X. used to wear a blue ring which the Marchesa (my landlady) valued at £400. She told me how when she was received by Pius IX. she asked a blessing for her husband and children and he made the obvious inquiries about the children's ages. As she spoke French he asked if she were a Frenchwoman. "Oh! no," she replied, "I am a Piedmontese." "You are mistaken, my daughter," he replied severely. She looked up in wonder, and he went on, "You should have said that you were an Italian."

The Marchesa took an American woman to see Pius X. and made her promise to behave properly. "Remember," she said, "that here is someone greater than any King, and therefore much greater than any of your Presidents, who may have been sausage-sellers for aught one knows"—which was not a specially well-chosen remark as Pius X. was of lowly origin.

At the audience, the Pope gave a general blessing to all their medals, etc., but this did not satisfy the American, who rushed forward to ask him to touch hers. An ecclesiastic stopped her, but the Pope asked what was the matter and good-naturedly blessed her medals.

The Marchesina (daughter of the Marchesa) related some stories about Mussolini, the famous brigand who became almost a national hero in Italy. He was a Calabrian youth who began his career by killing somebody for wronging his sister. He considered himself under the protection of St. Joseph and always asked his help before setting forth to kill a man. When he took to the hills he believed that St. Joseph warned him whenever the police were after him, even enabling him to kill some of them. St. Joseph also helped him to escape from prison. This, at least, was stated at his trial, and an atheist lawyer said that St. Joseph ought to be prosecuted as an accessory. Mussolini was a regular communicant, and always wore a medal of St. Joseph.

The Marchesina also told me of a woman who went to church one day and prayed for a lover. She found one as she was leaving the church and offered up a silver heart as a thank-offering to the Madonna. The man was already married, but he divorced his wife and then married the lady who had prayed for him. As the ceremony could not take place in church they were much worried. So they took two rings and had them blessed by a priest—a priest will bless anything on payment of a fee—and the couple went to Mass and slipped the rings on each other's fingers. Then they considered themselves rather more married. But when the man was dying, his parish priest would consent to come and give him the last sacrament only if his wife left the house. Not only did she do this, but she consented to renounce all claim to his inheritance. The Marchesina thought this stupid, on the ground that one should either be one thing or the other—a saint or a sinner. She also told me about a man who went to confess that he was going to commit suicide, as he thought quite conscientiously that it was the only thing

for him to do. The priest realized that it was hopeless to convince him, so he found out when the man was going to throw himself into the Tiber. Then he followed him and saved his life.

The Marchesina served for a long time as a hospital nurse and found that none of the patients would believe the ladies were not paid, for the ordinary nurses of pre-war time not only received salaries but expected presents. One man said to her, "If you look after me well, my wife will bring you a dozen eggs." Another received some serpent-soup, or water-snake soup, which is supposed to be a wonderful pick-me-up and wanted to give it to her. The Queen of Italy started a training school for nurses where they had to spend three years. Previously the only nurses were either nuns, who were not good nurses, or else they were women of small attainments and doubtful character. The Queen insisted on very strict discipline for her nurses, but they were very badly fed, receiving only soldiers' rations served very roughly with dirty tablecloths; there were no small luxuries like coffee for night nurses, and it was difficult to obtain even a glass of water. They brought thermos flasks and sandwiches and chocolate.

9 March. I met the German first secretary and his English wife, who still occupy an apartment in the German Embassy at the Capitol, which is supposed to be shut up. He was a German King's messenger and is probably still spying. She has brothers fighting on our front, and he has brothers fighting on theirs. Scarcely any of her old friends will speak to her and those who go to visit her are begged not to speak English lest they should annoy the German porter at the Embassy. This porter interferes with her correspondence and she has to have it addressed elsewhere. It appears that an



Italian officer has been trying to meet this First Secretary for some weeks, intending to box his ears and provoke a row which would be mentioned in the papers. He went to the Questura about him and was told the man was not in Rome. Evidently the authorities have some reason for protecting him.

The Marchesa was relating how very *ancien regime* her husband's grandfather was. When he was ninety-four he looked across the table at his great-grandson, aged four, and said to the butler, "Help the Marchesino first, for he has more ancestors than I." One feast day the old man had to appear among the peasantry of his estate; he threw them money and told them to be careful not to touch him.

The shortage of butter alarms my landlady as much as anything. I remarked that it seemed of little importance. The Marchesa opened her eyes very wide and said, "It is necessary for cooking. If I have food cooked in oil, I am ill. You might as well give me food steeped in castor oil."

12 March. In the church of San Lorenzo in Damaso they have a preacher in one pulpit and a sinner in another opposite, and the sinner is allowed to answer the preacher. Another preacher has a man in the congregation to interrupt with objections which he answers, and no one suspects it is a put-up job.

A new laid egg in the Province of Cosenza was found to have five numbers easily decipherable on the shell. On the 3rd of March all five came out in the lottery at Naples, but the owner of the egg had mixed them up with other numbers and just missed a huge fortune.

Today I met an A. D. C. to the King, just returned on leave. He says the King and his suite have a cup of black coffee before they set out at five or six A. M.

Their lunch is all done up in packets for them and consists of soup (which is heated up), cold *frittata* (scrambled eggs), a cold wing of chicken, fruit and coffee. When they are lucky they have a similar meal on returning to headquarters. Otherwise they must do with what remains over from lunch. The A. D. C. is the only one of the party who takes wine. He says he finds the King's conversation rather above his head.

2 April. Stations at San Prassede, where I saw a priest with a face exactly like a hippopotamus. His mouth projected about four inches in quite a friendly way. I saw him go up to a woman and make her give up her chair to him as a matter of course.

14 April. Mrs. H. related how, when she was a little girl, she stood in the streets of Brussels with her mother, courtesying to King Leopold I. Some Americans remarked sarcastically, "In our country we are all sovereigns." "Yes," said Mrs. H.'s mother, "you look it!" Mrs. H. related how, at a trial at Brussels the other day, a German officer tried to ingratiate himself with a girl, and said she reminded him of an English lady he used to know. "Was it Miss Cavell?" she inquired quietly. For this she was had up and sent to prison for a month.

A soldier just returned from the front told me that, while he was at mess, a monk came and talked to the soldiers and accepted some of their food. Later on they were billeted at a neighboring Franciscan monastery, and asked after this monk, as he had made a great impression on them and they would like to see him again. When had they seen him? They mentioned the day, but no monk had left the monastery at that time. They described him minutely but without success. It was suggested that they should wait outside the refectory and

see the monks come out, but he was not among them. Then, suddenly, one of the soldiers pointed to a picture in the refectory and said, "There he is!" All the others corroborated his statement. It was St. Francis of Assisi.

The Marchesa went this morning to the Vatican for a Beatification. Pope Benedict spoke for a quarter of an hour very clearly in Italian but had not prepared his speech well. He is very, very small and very, very yellow—which is said to be due to his liver.

He hopped about and talked to many people, with a pleasant smile. He is never still for a moment, either fidgeting with his rings, or passing his fingers over his eyes, or stroking his neck.

The Marchesa related how the Princess X. refused to stand up when a cardinal came into a room. Someone grumbled to Leo XIII., who said, "Don't worry, *elle comprend la politique peut-être mieux que la politesse*" (She understands politics better than politeness).

In Rome (December, 1916) I met an American lady journalist who was very proud of her exploits on behalf of a Chicago newspaper. She made a number of fruitless attempts to interview a certain Monsignore, who had just been appointed Nuncio to Munich; but she was always sternly refused, as the Vatican was particularly suspicious of the press during the war. At last she asked to be allowed to see him on an errand of mercy. She said that some American girls had been detained at Munich ever since the outbreak of hostilities and she was sure that he could not refuse to listen to her on that subject. "And of course," she added, "he did not know that those girls never existed."

"You invented them?"

"Yes," she laughed, "I invented them and I had to talk a long time about them and their hard case, invent-

ing every kind of intimate detail; but I managed to get in some interesting questions. I asked whether he thought the Central Powers would accept terms of peace, and he said he knew they would accept practically any terms of peace, for they were at the end of their tether. I asked if the Vatican did not disapprove of the atrocities committed by the Central Powers; he said no one could doubt it, and he expressed himself with some vigor. But by this time my ecclesiastical friend, who had brought me on my errand of mercy, became suspicious and hastened to end the interview. As we came out he said to me with considerable anxiety, 'You are not going to use any of that for the press?' 'Certainly I am,' I replied, 'I am going to telegraph it all straight away.' Imagine what a nice reception the unfortunate Nuncio will have at Munich on his arrival, when the people learn that he has been informing the press that the Central Powers are practically suing for peace and that the Vatican entirely disapproves of their atrocities!"

In December, 1916, I found Miller, the *Morning Post* correspondent in Rome, disgustingly pessimistic about the war. He agreed that England could hold out for fifteen years, or indeed forever, but he asked me how long she could hold her Allies. He discoursed on the poorness of the Italian navy, which was well known to the British Admiralty before the war and was soon admitted by the Italians themselves. Miller, like myself, had previously shared the popular superstition that the Italian navy was next to ours; but now he said British sailors had come to the conclusion that the Italians are not a seafaring nation, and that the Italian navy left ours to do all the work owing to a fear of being reduced below the level of the Austrian. His great grievance was that the Italians scarcely helped at all with the mine-sweeping

in the Adriatic and had very little idea of the work we had done in that respect.

10 January, 1917. At a requiem today for some dead soldier, an old lady, overcome with emotion, was telling everybody aloud in church with tears and sobs how her son had always cherished a special devotion for St. Anthony of Padua, how he was one of twenty engaged on the butchers' work at the front and how shells killed all of them save two, himself and another. Thereupon the priest joined the group and gave an impromptu address on the blessedness of faith.

C., who accompanied me to this service, told me she had been making vows to the Madonna and received all her desires. She thought of promising to turn Roman Catholic if the Madonna answered a special prayer. "Why Roman?" I asked, and waited in vain for an answer. To the best of my belief, the Madonna was an Anglican. Anyhow, all the best women have been English.



## CHAPTER XXI

### KAISER WILLIAM

I ONCE incurred the wrath of the German Emperor, but quite unintentionally. I was hurrying through the streets of Berlin with a great bundle of books under my right arm and parcels of all sorts in both hands. As I poised myself on a curb of Friedrichstrasse, preparatory to making a dash for the refuge in the center, I was arrested by a warning cry. The Imperial carriage was almost upon me.

I had barely time to stumble back, shift parcels anyhow, and take off my hat with my left hand. But fancy saluting an Emperor with the left hand! And such an Emperor! I have known men in India knocked down by choleric colonels for milder solecisms. No wonder His Majesty was wroth and forgot his dignity.

He leaned right out of his carriage and shouted something that sounded very like, "Swine!" Then came an exhibition of rage that must be rare even in the varied history of the Hohenzollerns. The Kaiser put out his Imperial tongue at the unknown Englishman!

How childish! Yes, but he has always had something of the spoiled child in him, with all a spoiled child's license to do just what happened to enter his head. And just then he was murmuring an equivalent of *Gott strafe England* to himself nearly all the time. It was soon after his father's death, when he had put his mother under arrest and set sentinels at every door of the palace to prevent her exporting her diaries and private papers;

and it was an Englishman, perhaps even a left-handed Englishman, who had helped to smuggle them away.

Still, with his chameleon temper, he has often offered an apparently warm welcome to Englishmen before and since. I say "apparently" because there was almost always an element of mischief about it. I remember an industrial deputation that he came to meet when he was cruising about somewhere near Hamburg. He said nothing about industry but a great deal about the sea, and we all began to wonder what he was driving at.

"A very nasty, choppy sea!" he roared, in that colloquial, exotic English of his. There was an odd look in his eyes and the muscles twitched at the corners of his mouth. "Ah! gentlemen," he went on, "confess now, weren't you all very sick indeed when you crossed the North Sea? Didn't you feel sorry that you had ventured upon our German Ocean, our great safeguard against invasion?"

Then he threw back his shoulders and gave vent to peal upon peal of Homeric laughter that seemed as though it never would stop. I have been told that anything to do with seasickness is an unfailing source of joy to him. However gloomy and perturbed he may be, the mere mention of a bad crossing suffices to restore his mirth.

His laugh is unlike any other in the world—not so much a mad laugh as an uncanny one. He opens his mouth very wide and bellows, or rather bays, screwing up his nose and shutting his eyes. It is not an infectious laugh, for you are too much astonished to want to join in. At last there are three or four loud snaps or barks, and he stops suddenly. The only sound I have heard at all like it is the laughter of a forest when a storm is passing away.

Most of his humor is of the simplest, silliest kind, such as would make small schoolboys feel ashamed. Occasionally; however, he has devised practical jokes that must have required a long period of incubation. For instance, he made quite a practice of inviting Mr. Winston Churchill to the German maneuvers and then scarcely allowing him to open his mouth.

"He received me very kindly," Mr. Churchill told me ruefully, on his return from one of these expeditions; "but his ideas of conversation are distinctly one-sided. He insists on doing all the talking himself."

This must have been a special form of torture deliberately prepared for one of the best talkers in the world, as William's habit is to ply most people with incessant questions. The idea of garrulity can be derived only from memories of his many public indiscretions.

When he stayed in the New Forest (some say for purposes of high espionage) he made himself quite popular with the villagers by giving elaborate tea-fights to their children. He used to organize their games with Potsdam precision and give them Imperial souvenirs, which they treasured as heirlooms until war came with its song of hate; also imperial pinches, which sometimes hurt.

His delight has always been to surprise people, whether agreeably or not was of no consequence. I have seen him deliberately omit to tip humble people and then watch stealthily to see how they took their disappointment. He usually gave them something in the end, but the reward would not depend on their patience so much as on the whim of the moment. Mischief has always been the keynote of his more than eccentric character.

For instance, when he went abroad special police were told off to guard him against conspirators; and he used

to devise the most elaborate plots to dodge his keepers and make them look foolish. His disguises were so ingenious that the astutest detective could not be expected to penetrate them. Remember that there is no inherent nobility in his bearing and features. I have seen him look like a mediaeval saint in a stained glass window, especially once when he stood in the porch of a Hampshire church; but in badly cut clothes he might be taken for a counter-jumper. You might think that his famous moustache could never be mistaken, but he had the power of twisting it into the most unexpected shapes; and without its bristling prongs he looked very commonplace. Essentially common, he could easily pass as a commoner. And yet there was a fascination about him. I still think often of him as a great gentleman. I amused myself by drinking his health at fourteen messes in Macedonia, but luckily no one took me seriously. Some thought I was drunk, others remembered that he had given us the opportunity for a victorious war.

Oddly enough, though he was fanatical about morality at home, he was always curious to see life in all its forms. I do not believe there was anything wicked about his escapades, in spite of his intimacy with Krupp and others who may be described as "philanthropists" in the liberal sense of the word. But one of his ambitions was to pose as a gay dog, and this led sometimes to unpleasant moments, for he could not stand chaff and cherished notions of *lèse-majesté* at the back of his head even during his most expansive hours.

Secret visits to Paris were frequent before the war, a remarkable double being employed to represent him at home. The French police were informed and tried to shadow him, but he often outwitted them and occasionally there were awkward incidents. Once upon a time,

for instance, he and an equerry went in disguise to a Montmartre dancing-den and ordered lavish refreshments in guttural tones. Champagne corks popped, frivolous females sat on the knees of the august guests, strange oriental dances were performed by special request. Also a desire was soon shown to see the color of the strangers' money. But royal persons rarely carry money and William had not a sou. Then the equerry discovered to his dismay that his pocket had been picked. Here was a pretty pickle! They suggested sending to their hotel, but this was scouted as a dodge to summon the police. They pleaded, they expostulated, they threatened, but all in vain. The crowd grew more and more offensive. The term *boche* had not been invented, but Paris apaches and their *gonzesses* had small difficulty in voicing their opinion of Huns who had dared to try to "pose a rabbit" upon them. Words soon led to blows, long knives gleamed in the dim, irreligious light, and for a moment it seemed as though the war-lord would fall victim to a dubious hand in a slum of the city he aspired to capture. As it was, the rough and tumble reached very dangerous lengths and escape became possible only through a sudden alarm caused by the knocking of fresh revelers at the door. Then Emperor and equerry managed to squeeze their way out and the last seen of them was a disheveled monarch and his companion running down a foul street, bruised, coatless, hatless, with tousled hair, yelling desperately for cabs that were not to be found. This incident was kept very secret, but the equerry fell into disgrace during the war and told the story to a young Hungarian officer whom I used to visit at Portoferrajo during his captivity in 1915.

For some reason or other, Horsfall, who seems to have been very well treated during a long confinement



at Ruheben, cherished a peculiar dislike for the German Emperor and for most of his subjects. He related a story he had heard about the Empress from one of her courtiers who held a high position in the camp. "I can make nothing of all these modern painters," she said. "It is strange that they should be so bad, for my husband has so often shown them what they ought to do."

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA

IT was a dangerous and difficult legacy that Francis Joseph left to the Emperor Charles. The patchwork empire may have been a crowned democracy, as Mr. Wickham Steed has described it, but it depended upon personal government, and every shrewd observer perceived that it would go to pieces when deprived of the guidance of an experienced hand. The Emperor Charles had been brought up as a soldier rather than as a statesman, and his call to the throne came as a surprise. To add to his troubles he was called to take the reins at a time when his country was losing the greatest war in history, and the problems which confronted him would have baffled a Napoleon or a Metternich. He tried his utmost to make peace, but he was hindered and betrayed at every step by the Prussians and the French.

What was our conception of an Austrian before the war? Not much more than a surprisingly genial German. We knew only the aristocracy, who came over to hunt, had perfect manners and vast estates, danced divinely, might even be contemplated as husbands by girls who had not read the romances of Mme. de Laszowska-Gerard. And we knew vaguely that Austria was a contraction of Oesterreich, the Eastern Empire, a pompous Byzantine intrusion, hovering within the portals of our old civilized continent.

Apart from the aristocracy, which is cosmopolitan, Austrians might be easily dismissed by unfriendly critics

as a superior kind of native in the Indian or African sense of the term. They love color and tinsel and sunshine and music and coffee. They are lazy, superstitious, vain and corrupt. Centuries would be required to teach them to govern themselves. One is reminded of Asquith's summary of other orientals: "They are always ready to fall on your neck or to fall at your feet, but never to stand by your side." What a crew for the scepter of a young and inexperienced captain!

I stayed in Austria from the autumn of 1920 to the spring of 1922, brooding over the carcass of a great Empire. Not here the cold ordered embers of Pompeii, but the putrid, reeking entrails of a slain mammoth. All energy had departed from the people, who seemed sunk in apathy and despair. Practically no one worked. Shops closed during the best hours of the day had persistently discouraged purchases, partly, no doubt, because money was rapidly losing all value. The gospel of Lenin had not been openly adopted, but a limited Bolshevism had already begun to make itself felt. Instead of plundering banks and coffers under the aegis of a red flag, the federal republic had issued unlimited banknotes without troubling about a reserve; until a thousand crowns, the old equivalent of £40, was reduced to the fraction of a penny. The consequences permeated every walk of life in the most painful way. The heir to £1,000 a year found himself reduced automatically to a farthing a week, or an officer found his pension worthless for the most humble purchase. Indeed, a great part of the middle classes were reduced to seeking charity or selling bootlaces or playing the fiddle in cinematographs.

Wherever I went, the outlook seemed utterly hopeless. The only monarchists were impoverished landed proprietors, retired officers, fervent Catholics, and in Vienna

and Styria a proportion of the middle classes. In October, 1921, I attended a number of gatherings at Salzburg, connected with the annual "Catholic Days," which the Church organizes, not for any special festival, but because the season is convenient after the harvest. Here were all the representatives of the conservative workers, the most probable nucleus of monarchist sentiment; and at that very moment their Sovereign was leading his army towards Budapest. All were gossiping together in the friendliest fashion, but not one of them ever made the faintest reference to the great historical drama which was then in progress. The explanation afforded me by a local leader was that they regarded high politics as outside their sphere, but that if the Imperial pair had suddenly appeared amongst them, I should have witnessed an enthusiastic demonstration of loyalty. If the Emperor had succeeded in establishing himself at Budapest, I am told he would have been ruling in Vienna within six months. But the Austrian monarchists had neither money nor enterprise to work for a restoration. They probably desired an Emperor as a kind of hereditary President of the United States of Austria, but they were as far removed from our old Jacobite ideas as a modern statesman is from the Crusades.

When I tried to impress the need of activity and sacrifice upon Baron Schäger von Eckartsau, the Emperor's representative at Vienna, all he had to say was that the winners of the war ought not to be hard on Austria. She had always cherished friendship for England and France, she had her own grievances against Prussia, she needed help to escape from famine and bolshevism. He was evidently less concerned for his Sovereign than for the faded embers of the Empire. Pressed on that point, he could only answer, "The Emperor

Charles is a very lovable young man. He is not merely pious and conscientious, but a true democrat in the best sense of the word." Thus the old cry of "King and Country" has been inverted. Divine right lies dead in its last stronghold.

When I started working for the restoration of the Emperor, I found myself opposed by an impenetrable wall of prejudice. Even when all Europe was ringing with the news of the dramatic raid upon Hungary, scarcely a single English newspaper would put in a fair word about the Emperor and Empress, and I failed to find a member of either House of Parliament willing to take up their cause. Here were purveyors of news deliberately refusing "good copy" and critics of the Government denying themselves an opportunity of representing the Foreign Office in a very ugly light.

I can only suppose that secret influences were at work and that an order had gone forth that the edicts of the Little Entente must be respected.

The clue to all the troubles of the age is to be found in the phrase *cherchez la France*. The vain and effeminate nation, which we saved from immediate dissolution, has persistently attempted to secure all the spoils of her saviors' arms and has been permitted to direct the world's policy for her personal profit. It is not too much to say that whenever French concession hunters come in at the door, all honest dealings fly out of the window. When the outraging of Montenegro was carried out under the auspices of Franchet d'Esperrit, Lloyd George said to a friend of mine, "It is a damned shame, but we can't afford to annoy France for the sake of a few mountains." And now we find French concessionaires in Belgrade, Prague, Bucharest and Constantinople conniving to ex-



clude the Apostolic King from his capital and to bring back the infidel Turks across the Bosphorus.

In September, 1921, I visited the Emperor Charles at his place of exile on the Lake of Lucerne. My impressions are of a castle on a little promontory amid elfin woods, peopled by choruses of birds; the reflection of snow mountains, including grim Pilatus, where, the legends say, Christ's judge found his miserable end; merry Imperial children boating and fishing and shouting at play. This castle of Hertestein nestling in the loveliest corner of Europe had been the abode of Queen Victoria, the refuge of an exiled Bavarian King after Prussian victories in 1866, and more recently a tourists' hotel. There was still a board on the roof, SCHLOSS HOTEL HERTENSTEIN—with "HOTEL" obliterated. A palisade had been set up all round the grounds to keep off intruders.

The Emperor's secretary knocked at the door, a voice called "Come in"; and I was ushered into the presence of His Majesty, who rose from a wicker chair in the corner and held out his hand very graciously, saying he was happy to make my acquaintance.

My first impression was of a well-knit man, broad of forehead, frank, kindly, with big blue eyes and the firm thick lips familiar on the canvasses of old masters at Vienna and Madrid; neat and simple of raiment, with his modest ways and strength of character recalling a laird of Walter Scott.

His French was almost perfect and might have been passed for a Frenchman's except that he had a slightly guttural intonation when pronouncing some of his r's. He began with questions about Austria and conditions there, taking extreme interest in every detail, though he seemed quite as well informed as myself. He attributed

the actual disasters of his country to the mistakes of the Peace Treaty. The Empire had been a sufficiently varied microcosm to thrive on the exchange of home products. For all practical purposes it was self-supporting. Hungary supplied Austria with cereals and cattle to the value of a thousand million gold crowns, while Austria reciprocated with six hundred millions of textile and six hundred millions of iron, steel, chemicals, etc. The present Rump State, "*la soi-disante république*," as he called it, has been reduced to one-eighth of the old territory and is expected to bear most of the old responsibilities. Producing scarcely one-tenth of its requisite coal, it is incapable of working many of its best mines. The weavers all remain in Czecho-Slovakia, now a separate, almost hostile state. The dyeing and dressing of textiles could be continued, but poverty has placed raw materials out of reach and the profitable work of finishing iron has ceased because iron is no longer to be had. Gone are the oils of Galicia. No artificial manure is available to improve Austrian crops, which depend on intensive culture. The Alpine regions still supply the best and strongest cattle, but the fat pastures of Hungary and Bohemia are now outside the Austrian frontiers. Nor have the new frontiers even succeeded in benefitting the Succession States, which are suffering almost as severely from disruption and can gratify their pride only at the expense of their pockets. They would undoubtedly gain by reunion, without which the Austrian Rump could scarcely hope to survive as a settled State.

The Emperor has always been very frank about his democratic point of view. His ambition was to rule as a constitutional monarch, a sort of hereditary president, who would be above parties and would enable the various

parts of the old Empire to prosper under a reasonable system of Home Rule.

He remarked that post-war conditions had brought about a reversion to the middle ages. To this I ventured to reply that the middle ages were surely admirable in many ways, contributing to law and order and discipline and patriotism. Poverty was practically unknown in the good old times when monasteries kept open doors for the relief of the destitute.

The Emperor looked up in surprise to find me more royalist than himself. He said that, in his opinion, the middle ages depended almost entirely upon force, and that Europe was now running a risk of reverting to its lawlessness.

When he came to the throne, he found a war which he had not desired; and he remarked to me that he was still unable to see why his peace proposals had not been accepted in 1917. In his opinion, the chief obstacle was provided by the Emperor William, who still cherished hopes of victory. Adopting a tone which I have found far from unusual in Austrian statesmen, the Emperor Charles added that Prussia had been for many generations the evil genius of Austria. He dwelt at some length and with some emphasis on the disagreeable character and manners and selfishness of Prussians. On my attempting to put in a good word for the Emperor William, he told me that the popular idea of that monarch was entirely a mistaken one. Far from being the man of iron, he possessed an uncertain temperament and always yielded to the latest advisers, going away with the impression that he had made their suggestions himself.

The Emperor questioned me about English politicians and wanted to know more about Lloyd George. I said that I believed his intentions were patriotic but that he

was inclined to give way too much to opportunism. That, said the Emperor, was the vice of the present day. Nearly everybody now seemed to put opportunism before principles, with the result that one could not expect any lasting settlement.

After asking me amiable questions about my travels, he told me many interesting things he had observed in Switzerland, which he seemed to have studied with care and intelligence. He also gave me some vivid descriptions of his campaigns on the Carso, where the chief danger arose not so much from the enemy's bullets as from the splinters of rocks which killed people surprisingly at great distances.

After an audience of over two hours, he rose and apologized for having tired me with so much talk; and then he dismissed me in the kindest way, saying, "*Monsieur, je suis enchanté d'avoir fait votre connaissance.*" My chief impressions were of the quickness of his intelligence, the deliberate way in which he considered every topic, and the wonderful charm of manner which has naturally aroused the warm devotion of his adherents.

When I returned to Austria, I found many people, even among his supporters, anxious to hear what I thought of him; for the calumnies of his enemies had been very widely circulated. The Stinnes newspapers seemed to have stuck at nothing in their depreciation of his character and mode of life, representing a saint and a statesman as almost on the borderland of imbecility.

I heard, however, a number of characteristic anecdotes, both about himself and the Empress Zita.

When Francis Joseph died, Count Czernin mused over the long reign, exclaiming, "We scarcely seem to have an Emperor now."

"What does that matter," Count Andrassy answered, "now that we have an Empress?"

This was repeated to the new Sovereigns, who were both amused. Presently, when Czernin and Andrassy were with the Emperor Charles in his study, the Empress came in. Charles rose with smiles of devotion, stretched out his arm and took up the historical cry of Hungarian allegiance: "*Moriamur pro Rege nostro Maria Theresa!*" We will die for our "King" Maria Theresa; we will die for our "King" Zita!

The Empress has the courage and strength of her great predecessors, but she has been still more conspicuous for her kindness of heart. The people acclaimed her as *Landesmütterchen*, "little mother of the nation," and Minister of Good Works. She started or developed institutions for the war-blind, for widows and orphans, for maidens' dowries, and she was the most systematic of workers.

Her vivacity and charm, her naturalness and strong individuality won the hearts of all. But the greatest wave of enthusiasm was aroused by her first public appearance, leading by the hand her little son, Crown Prince Otho, loveliest of children. It was against all the traditions and stiff etiquette of the Austrian Court for children to be seen at great functions, but the act appealed to the imagination of the people.

She was born on May 9, 1892, at the court of her father, the Duke of Parma, and named after the patron saint of the neighboring town of Lucca. The eleventh child of a family of eighteen, she ran no risk of being spoilt. Her father was somewhat of a literary recluse, her mother a strong-minded disciplinarian. Little Zita's chief pleasure lay in ministering to the poor. And when she was asked what she would like for her birthday she



chose a sewing machine so that she might work for the children of the estate. She has continued to cultivate the queenly art of needlework and excels as a player on the organ, often moving a big congregation to tears. She is a great lover of animals, having adopted all sorts of strange pets, till they almost amount to a zoo; and she has been known to allow her chickens to come into the drawing-room.

At the age of ten she was sent to be educated in a convent in Bavaria, and remained there for six years. Then, after a short holiday at home, she went to the Benedictine convent at Ryde, where her grandmother, the widow of King Miguel of Portugal, was Abbess.

The world must have seemed strange to her when she was suddenly plunged into it at the age of seventeen. She was staying with a cousin at Franzensbad when she met the kindly, winning Archduke Charles. They fell in love at once, and, in spite of their subsequent misfortunes, may be said to have lived happily ever after.

When it became necessary for the Imperial family to retire from Godollo, their country estate near Budapest, an incident was recorded. Cars were waiting at the castle doors, watched malevolently by a crowd of disaffected soldiers. The little Crown Prince ran out alone upon the steps. Seeing soldiers and not realizing the possibility of any change in their devotion, he broke out into smiles and gave them a military salute with his baby hand. At first there were derisive yells and coarse remarks, but his bonny face and imperturbable dignity made all unfriendliness impossible. In a few seconds communists had been conquered by his charm and broke out into enthusiastic cheers.

After the proclamation of an Austrian republic in November, 1918, the Emperor remained with his family

in retirement at Eckartsau for four months, and a sculptor came to make his bust. Little Otho was present at the sittings and drank in most of the conversation. One day it turned on the conditions of life at Vienna, which were growing very uncomfortable, and the Emperor asked whether there were still any cabs there. This intrigued the child, who interrupted:

"Daddy Emperor, what does that mean, a cab?"

"What, don't you know that? Why the cabs of Vienna have their own song. Wait, and I'll sing it to you."

Then in Viennese dialect, with his melodious baritone voice, the Emperor began to sing the song of the Viennese cabmen. He accomplished two verses and could remember no more. The sculptor could not help him but promised to obtain the words from the author. The author had only one copy, and found great trouble in obtaining another at ten times its original cost. When it came at last, the Emperor had been driven away to Switzerland and the cab-song followed him as the last souvenir from his capital.

The Emperor's first attempt at a recovery of his throne took place at Easter, 1921. The Empress was still laid up after the birth of a child, Charles was also in bed with a sharp attack of influenza and had injured his foot severely by treading on a piece of broken glass. So nothing seemed more unlikely than a raid. When he came to say good-bye to his children they noticed that he had grown a beard, which altered his appearance considerably. No one had been told of his design except his wife and Count Erdödy, his adjutant, with whom he boarded the Geneva-Vienna express. A diplomatic passport excused him from frontier formalities and on the journey no one recognized him dressed up in a foreign uniform. His taxi-driver at Vienna retained vague recol-

lections of a friendly officer who had given him some ham-sandwiches and chatted in remarkably good German. The Emperor stayed a short while with Erdödy to confer with supporters, and the Republican authorities afterwards tried to confiscate the house on the ground that it had been used for a "treasonable" purpose. Then he drove by car across the Hungarian frontier to Steinamanger, where the officers advised him to confer with Admiral Horthy, the regent of Hungary, who was supposed to be favorable. However, instead of wasting time in messages and telephone conversations, he jumped into a car with a couple of friends and drove straight to his capital.

Here his arrival was like a bolt from the blue. At the Premier's office no one recognized him; and, when the officials telephoned to the Regency that the King had returned to take over his throne, they were met by ribald requests not to tell fairy stories. Meanwhile Charles grew impatient and drove on to the Regency, where he disturbed Horthy at lunch. They talked for about three hours, Horthy suavely explaining that he was most anxious to restore his Sovereign, had indeed merely been holding office for that purpose; but that an immediate restoration would mean disaster, as the Servians and Bohemians would invade Hungary with overwhelming forces. This was quite untrue and Horthy behaved treacherously all through; but Charles believed him and consented to return to exile for the sake of the country, Horthy promising to bring him back at the first opportunity.

By the following October everything seemed promising for a fresh attempt. Private assurances had been received from the big Entente powers that they would accept accomplished facts if he succeeded. Horthy was

profuse in dutiful promises, and Bethlen, his Premier, had come to terms with Italy and Servia and Bohemia, or at least pretended to believe that he had done so. There were, however, some ugly rumors that Horthy was beginning to remove loyal troops beyond the capital, and supporters urged Charles to act at once before such treachery could take effect.

There was also a difficulty about the Empress. In her loyalty and patriotism and love of sport, she had made up her mind to come, too. Objections were made that the presence of a woman might embarrass the adventurers and it was asked—why offer two hostages to fortune when one would suffice? Moreover, though full of spirit, Her Majesty was not in the most robust state of health. The little Archduchess Charlotte had been born in March and now another happy event was expected. On the other hand, as she pointed out, her presence would appeal to the popular imagination. Perhaps the chief hope of success lay in rushing things through dramatically on the crest of a wave of enthusiasm. She swept all objections aside by repeating, "My place is at my husband's side."

On Wednesday, October fifteenth, four passages were taken from the Ad Astra Company of Berne for a flight to Geneva and back. Only Zimmerman, the Bavarian pilot, was privy to the destination, and it is not certain that he knew the identity of his passengers. He protested when he saw a lady arrive with the four men at the little village of Dubendorf, which had been chosen for the start; but his objections were soon overruled. The passengers came at noon on Thursday in three cars, and were muffled up so that they were practically unrecognizable. It was a fine aeroplane, luxuriously fitted with

armchairs and tables. The four men sat inside, the Empress beside the pilot.

From Thursday till Saturday, the company had no news of their machine. Then the papers startled the world with the announcement that the Emperor Charles and the Empress Zita had landed at Oedenburg in West Hungary. The completeness of the surprise may be gauged by the fact that when their Majesties walked through the gardens of Count Esterhazy's castle, weary and travel-stained, the Countess said to her husband, "What are those people doing? I suppose it is the new cook."

The excitement can be imagined. Jubilant crowds sprang up apparently from nowhere, women in national costume brought huge bouquets of roses when the royal pair went to the barracks of the forty-eighth regiment, and the soldiers received them with every demonstration of joy. Charles issued a proclamation announcing his return to the throne, the dismissal of Horthy's ministry and the appointment of a new government consisting of the best known Hungarian statesmen. There seemed every prospect of success. At least half the army was for the King and the remainder was reported to be ready to accept accomplished facts. Parliament was favorable, except for the members of the Small Farmer's Party; and Charles had apparently only to proceed to Budapest and take possession.

Even now it is difficult to guess why he failed. The most likely explanation is that over-confidence and the desire to avoid bloodshed induced dangerous delays. If he had gone straight on by train, he would have reached the capital on Friday evening before the news of his presence in Hungary, and no one would have offered the slightest opposition. His Premier, Rakovsky, however,



wasted precious time in formalities and the preparation of proclamations. It was not until Saturday that Charles reached Totis, a market town fifty-five miles from the capital, destined to be a chief scene of the drama.

Meanwhile the Regent's Premier, Count Bethlen, had hurried back to Budapest from Fünfkirchen, where he had been making a speech favorable to Charles. A Council of Ministers was summoned in haste and the War Minister reported that the army could not be trusted. It was decided to send out a company of the Budapest Guards, under Colonel Kurz, but in a few hours news came that Kurz had gone over. Bethlen recognized that the situation was lost and retired to his room with a cold compress round his head.

Meanwhile Gömbös, the leader of the anti-monarchists, had been recalled from Fünfkirchen by his adherents. He started at noon on Saturday along the lines on a sort of lorry, armed with five revolvers in case of opposition, looking like a bandit of comic opera. He dragged Bethlen out of bed and said to him, "You are committing a pig's trick" (*Schweinerei*). "We must not abandon everything at once. The King must be arrested."

Bethlen was horrified and protested that no soldier would take part in the arrest of his Sovereign.

"Then I will shoot," Gömbös returned. And he proceeded to organize resistance himself. He began by collecting a hundred and twenty students of the Technical High School, provided them with cannon and sent them to capture the King at Totis. This was the whole of the military force available for resisting the restoration, and it was quickly captured and disarmed by the battalion in the first of the royal trains.

If Charles had then pressed on to Budapest, he would have established himself there without resistance within

'an hour. But Rakovsky, in the intoxication of victory, wasted time in telephoning to Bethlen, while Gömbös bestirred himself and distributed 10,000 guns among the dregs of the population. At last the King's troops continued their advance towards the capital. There were only a few slight skirmishes until the defile of Budaors, some three miles outside Budapest, which they reached on Sunday the twenty-third. The capital remained quietly expectant. Crowds of sightseers went up the Blocksburg, which commands a view of the neighborhood, and followed the progress of the battle. The sound of firing was very distinct all the morning. It ceased about noon for awhile, then began again.

The battle was preceded by a field mass on the railway lines; celebrated by a bishop at a small extemporized altar, consisting of a table taken from one of the cars. Their Majesties knelt on one of the rails with the officers and soldiers in a semi-circle behind them. It was a solemn and impressive scene.

After Mass wounded men began to be brought in to the King's headquarters. This was the first intimation of any real resistance, except the vague sound of guns in the distance. Their Majesties were much affected as well as amazed, but quietly awaited the commander's report. He returned on Sunday evening and told how he had been received with machine guns at Budaors and had retired about a mile still holding a strong position. Charles replied, "We will not fight I am not here to fight against my own people."

Accounts are conflicting as to who asked for an armistice, but in any case it was violated by the government troops on Monday. Horthy had received considerable reinforcements from the provinces and his troops attacked in force. The royalists, having orders to avoid blood-

shed, contented themselves with defending their persons and retreated in order. At Totis they could retreat no further for the rails had been torn up by a hostile body in the rear.

Here the King and Queen were taken prisoners by government officers with every form of courtesy and conveyed to the Castle of Totis.

It was now that the worst dangers began for the Sovereigns. They had been under fire during the fighting, as the bullet marks on their railway carriage testify; but probably few, even of their bitterest opponents in the government ranks, desired to take their lives. But all sorts of irregulars were about, including members of brigand bands, who had long been terrorizing West Hungary and had small respect for Kings and Queens or any other persons in authority. One of their leaders, a blood-thirsty ruffian named Franczia Kiss, with a long record of crime to his account, heard a rumor that the Emperor was winning and had established his headquarters at Totis castle. So he set out with sixty desperadoes and arrived there, vowing he would hang the royal pair on the highest battlement. A regular siege took place and for some time the issue was in doubt, but at last the King's jailers were able to drive off the assailants with a loss of ten killed and a number of wounded.

Then the captives were taken to the monastery of Tihany, a remote and melancholy building nearly nine hundred years old on a volcanic promontory in the waters of Balaton, the largest lake in Hungary. It would be difficult to imagine a drearier prison, and stories soon spread that they had been brought there to be murdered as a simple solution of the whole dynastic question of Hungary. People talked gloomily of the fate of the Czar of Russia, who was dragged about from place to place

and finally cut to pieces with his family. As a matter of fact, however, the royal couple had already been taken over by British officials and their lives were now secure.

They were embarked on a gunboat on the Danube for conveyance to their exile at Madeira. The place was a hideously lonely reach and the only spectators were a few peasants from neighboring villages. In view of the Empress's condition it was thought she might find difficulty in negotiating the steep footpath to the river bank. So the sailors had prepared an armchair covered with the British flag to take her on board. The Papal Nuncio had also placed a small peasant-cart at her disposal, but she laughingly refused all these attentions and climbed down nimbly to the ship's gangway. It is said that the Hungarian officers treated the royal pair with great roughness and rudeness on the way, whereas the Entente officers did all they could to relieve the bitterness of their position. Be this as it may, the Emperor gave a friendly nod to the Hungarians as he left the train, and he said to the engine-driver with a smile, "I shall be back again in a couple of months."

It is only since the Emperor's death that his financial straits have become known, for he never uttered a word of complaint, or would allow protests to be made on his behalf. When he left Austria on the twenty-third of March, 1919, he had only three million Austrian crowns in his possession. In Switzerland he had to maintain not only his own family, but also his mother, Archduchess Maria Josepha, his brother Archduke Max and his wife and son, his uncle Archduke Peter Ferdinand and his wife and four children, and also his step-grandmother, Archduchess Maria Theresa. Including rent, personal expenses and the support of dependents who could not be cast adrift it was impossible to reduce the cost of

living below 80,000 or 90,000 Swiss francs a month. Such was his poverty that he was reduced to living from hand to mouth by the sale of his family jewels, and even so he could not obtain anything approaching decent prices from bloodsuckers who took advantage of his necessities and offered derisive prices.

The action of British officers in transferring him to Madeira made our government responsible for his maintenance, and one might imagine that he would have been treated at least as decently as our old enemy Bonaparte was after a long convulsion of Europe. But when the Emperor reached Madeira he had only £320 in his possession. The Council of Ambassadors talked vaguely of an eventual appanage, but meanwhile he was allowed no more than two pounds a week. This was not sufficient to meet the expenses of the modest hotel in Funchal, so he accepted the loan of a Portuguese banker's villa up in the hills. It was in a deplorable state, none of the doors or windows shutting, and the furniture looked as though it would fall to pieces at a glance. Their Majesties had to occupy one wretched room, with sufficient space only for the beds and a wash-stand. No hot water was ever available. It was impossible to heat any of the rooms and amid chronic mists the damp was awful. The simplest cooking could only be managed with the greatest difficulty. In his delicate state of health, the Emperor could obtain meat only once a day. The Empress was expecting a baby in May, but it was only when the Emperor was actually dying that a few rich friends in Vienna subscribed to send out a doctor.

The widowed Empress and her family are now endeavoring to claim some of the property which has been stolen by the Succession States. Article 206 of the Treaty of St. Germain prescribes the confiscation of "the private



property of the former ruling House of Austria" in the Succession States. This was intended to apply to the common property of the House of Hapsburg under various trusts, but the Czecho-Slovak government has extended it to include the personal property of the Emperor, most of which was neither Crown property nor had been acquired with the money of the State. Italy has proved equally voracious in the matter of the *Villa d'Este* at Tivoli and the Castle of Cattajo near Padua. The Treaty of St. Germain gave the Austrian Republic no right to confiscate anything, but the new state had already seized a considerable amount of Hapsburg property, allocating the proceeds to a fund for "War sufferers," who, however, have not received a penny up till now and do not seem likely to receive a penny in the future.

Apart from the legal rights of a fallen dynasty, it is surely a matter of common decency that some provision should be made for the exiled family of the Emperor, now dependent upon the generosity of Alphonso of Spain; who has gone out of his way to display a hospitality worthy of Louis XIV, without that monarch's political interest. Why should Alphonso be left to bear the brunt when England is responsible as the kidnaper of the Emperor and Empress, when the Entente powers have admitted their responsibility to the extent of a miserable dole, when the Austrian republic unjustly detains private property, and when Hungary still pretends to be a monarchy while suffering her monarch's family to remain in foreign dependence? The old Austrian aristocracy has suffered considerably since the revolution but it is difficult to imagine how loyalists can bear to eat the simplest meals in peace when they know that their young Sovereign and the Empress mother are left on the brink of necessity.

There are still many Hungarian magnates with castles and picture galleries and well-filled stables. And meanwhile, the Emperor William, whom Lloyd George swore to hang, was allowed to carry off vast wealth to his comfortable retreat in Holland.

"The only persons," said Dr. Lammasch, the last premier of the Austrian empire, "who could make peace a practical possibility were the Emperor Charles and Wilson. The Emperor Charles is the only monarch who has emerged unstained from this war. He is also one of the few statesmen this war has produced."

As he lay a-dying in penury and misery, he may well have recalled the last words of Pope Gregory VII, "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile."

## CHAPTER XXIII

### MR. CHURCHILL

ONE day Mr. Churchill came into the smoking room of the House of Commons when I was awaiting him there with Sir Edward Goulding. Instead of saying good morning, he stood before us and began to declaim:

"We have already proclaimed ourselves to be hand in glove with a remote island of yellow dwarfs; this policy will doubtless be extended to include the kiss of peace and the manifestation of brotherly love for every fetish-worshiping savage, for every murderous nigger, for every naked monster who can offer us assistance in our general conspiracy to obtain universal empire. Why, then, should we shrink from the logical conclusion of our new diplomacy, or neglect to solicit with our accustomed humility the support of the glorious gorilla, the bold baboon, and all those other marvelous monkeys who are destined to assert their claim to the lordship of the jungle?"

Taking no notice of Goulding's open-mouthed amazement or of my gratified mirth, he proceeded:

"It is a race that is one of the oldest in the world, actually the oldest, I imagine, of any biped, and intimately related by ancestral tradition to prehistoric humanity. For thousands of years it has enjoyed an unparalleled freedom, not merely from the aggressions of imperialism, but also from every tyranny of social convention. It is essentially an outdoor people, a nation of forest lovers, an eager, voluble, inquisitive race, possess-

ing all those qualities of effrontery that are so sure a passport to success in modern life. It is a people that increases and multiplies with incredible rapidity, even under conditions of the utmost hardship, and, if protected by the strong arm of our nation, should soon be in a position to overrun and subdue the greater part of the civilized world. It is not a nation of shop-keepers: having few needs, it possesses no industries, but wears natural garments of fur, and restricts its diet to nuts and other natural products of the jungle."

All this was repeated word for word from an article of mine which had appeared that morning. Coming from the most brilliant man of the age, I consider this the highest compliment I have ever received. It also affords evidence of the amazing memory which Mr. Churchill inherited from his father.

"It is delightful," he remarked, "If you delivered something like that as a speech in the House of Commons, you would establish your right to a hearing at once. There is nothing the House likes so much as to be amused. So long as you give it something fresh and unusual it is always satisfied."

Before I made Mr. Churchill's acquaintance, I confess that rumor and newspaper chatter had not entirely predisposed me in his favor. It was only when I read two of his speeches in the Autumn of 1901 that I advanced from a casual interest in his originality and surrendered myself to admiration of his statesmanship. So deeply impressed was I, however, by the wisdom of his principles, the independence of his thought and the courage of his attitude, that I wrote of his speeches, "They deserve to be studied sentence by sentence, to be repeated from platform to platform throughout the length and breadth of the land, almost to be inscribed in letters

of gold on every boarding. Now that a leader has at last revealed himself, one whose courage has been proved on the field and the platform, a master of tact and of tactics, a man of principle and a man of action, a friend of independence and a champion of tradition, we may safely entrust our fortunes to his keeping and join his guerilla warfare with equanimity and pride."

Receiving from him some very gracious expressions in respect of my appreciation, I suggested calling upon him and he immediately appointed an hour when I might find him at his flat near Grosvenor Square. I made my way thither with considerable curiosity, wondering what comparison I should have to make between him and his father, from whom I had received many kindnesses in former times. On reflection, I may say that Mr. Churchill has inherited many excellent gifts, brilliancy, courage, alertness, memory and wit, from Lord Randolph; but that he has added many others no less necessary to permanent success in the political arena. It is no exaggeration to say that, since Mr. Gladstone, perhaps even since Mr. Pitt, there has been no more thorough Parliamentarian. While still a mere child, as years are reckoned in public life, he revealed a self-restraint worthy of envy by senators who had grown gray in the service of the State; his prudence was equal to his impetuosity; the sympathetic instincts which enabled him to understand the feelings, sentiments and prejudices of every class cannot be set down as anything lower than genius.

Many of his readers must often have wondered how he contrived to produce so lucid and convincing a literary style. Harrow and Sandhurst, the rough and tumble of a subaltern's life, hairbreadth 'scapes in South Africa, the Philippines and the Indies, though a sufficient training for practical life, do not usually form the particular



type of mind necessary to a stylist. Moreover, he is an outdoor man, who finds his greatest pleasures in hunting and polo, and few outdoor men breathe comfortably in a library. Mr. Churchill has certainly inherited his father's surprising quickness of assimilation. He can master most subjects while others are groping at the gates of the avenue; he can imbibe an atmosphere as others toss off a brandy-peg. And in literature the atmosphere is the thing. He has created his own, but a careful student of his works may detect a sparkle of the gasses of Macaulay, an aroma of the intoxicating ozone of Disraeli the younger. He confessed to me his admiration for the form of their writings. "When a man reads Macaulay," said he, "the attention is not taken by the praise or blame so much as by the persistent effect of innumerable small touches. When the picture of one of Macaulay's characters is complete, you can scarcely help yourself, but are irresistibly driven to admire without reservation or to loathe with the fullest detestation. If, then, you desire to convey an impression of perfection or turpitude, do not proclaim your own opinion, but spread out your facts, elaborate your details, return to the charge and inflict the same wounds upon a different part. Thus, and thus only, can you make sure of convincing the obstinate."

He received me very courteously, shaking my hand with a grave smile, and invited me to be seated beside his writing table. He occupied a throne-like chair, with a lofty back of carved oak; and as he leaned far back I received the popular impression that he was considerably below the average height. Presently, however, when he stood up with his back to the fire, I was inclined to describe him as a tall and almost burly man. He had not spoken many words before I was mightily impressed

by a strong personal resemblance to his father, which had entirely escaped me at the outset. It was his speech which betrayed him. I noted in a moment the peculiar intonation, not to be described as a lisp, which I had not heard since the occasion of my last conversation with Lord Randolph. I detected from time to time the same gestures, the same mannerisms, the same sense of humor; but the laugh was different.

He has a laugh unlike that of anyone else—so infectious and so full of hilarity that none may refuse to partake. I have seen him share in the merriment aroused by one of his quips at a public meeting, and the audience has been spurred on to chew the cud of his humor; but when he enjoys a joke in private he is much more free from restraint and the infection is instantaneous. It is difficult to describe this laugh, the basis of which is a prolonged chuckle; the effect of it is due to the fact that he laughs not only with his throat and eyes, but with his whole body and almost with his soul. His laughter introduces us frankly to the devil-may-care, boyish, hang-it-all, honest, reckless side of his character. Anything for a joke it seems to say; and in an age of demure, calculating, irresponsible persons, it is an unalloyed delight to find someone who will let himself go.

Few probably possess so large a sense of humor, so frank an entrance even into jokes which might at first sight appear to tell against himself. He showed me with delight a poster which had been issued by the Transvaal Government offering a reward of £25 for his capture after he escaped from Pretoria. I remarked upon the strange experience of having a price set upon one's head. "Yes," he replied, "but what a miserably small price! I had been in jail and I had been a fugitive from justice;

and all that was offered for my capture, dead or alive, was a paltry five-and-twenty pounds."

He is one of the very few people who combine a sense of humor with a true religious instinct. His musings when a vulture watched him starving upon the veldt caused certain thorns to crackle under certain pots, but were undoubtedly inspired by those pious sentiments which underlie our national character. And his most intimate friends have always found him uncommonly reserved in the expression of his religious feelings.

But I am telling my tale too quickly. At this, my first audience, I was still a comparative stranger.

"X." "I seek your advice and help in order to make my way into Parliament."

CHURCHILL (surveying me thoughtfully, with his chin upon his hand). "How old are you?" (And when I had told him.) "Why have you waited so long?"

This was a palpable hit, and I began to ask myself very seriously why I had waited so long. I murmured something about the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches.

When I talked of standing as an independent candidate, he said, "This is the age of the party machine. Unless you belong to one or other of the recognized parties, you will not, in nine hundred and ninety nine cases out of a thousand, stand the ghost of a chance. The party machine is very strong. Of course, nothing is impossible; but unless you have very strong local influence behind you, it must take you years and years to build up a party which will carry you through. And even when you are elected, you may find yourself a mere unit, buffeted by a torrent or floating helplessly upon a stream. Men come to the House of Commons"—this he said with solemnity and some feeling—"with self-

confidence, with hopes, with ambitions, even with high reputations which they have acquired outside. But the House of Commons is the graveyard of reputations, its floor is strewn with the corpses of reputations—there is, perhaps, no sadder sight than the quick death which is meted out there to careers which have carried everything before them in the country. The House of Commons," he went on in a lighter vein, "is the great leveller. To win its heart may not require the highest attainments or the noblest enthusiasms, but it pricks every bubble, it shatters every sham. The way to get on there is not to be a great orator who has at his command those glowing periods which the populace can never resist. Indeed, the most successful demagogues have often proved the most abject failures when they rose to address Mr. Speaker. The only short cut to the ear of the House is sober common sense, a businesslike way of saying the right thing at the right moment and a resolute avoidance of claptrap or gush."

After this conversation I saw him frequently and at short intervals. He was never twice in precisely the same mood, but always agreeable, amusing and encouraging. Perhaps, the conversation which remains most vivid in my mind is one which took place on the morrow after Chamberlain's first declaration in favor of Protection. My interviews with Mr. Churchill usually took place at about eleven o'clock in the morning, and on this occasion stress of business had prevented me from giving more than a cursory glance at the newspapers. When I reached his flat I found him in his dressing-room putting the finishing touches to his toilet.

"Well," he began, "politics are becoming exciting at last."

I have a very sharp recollection of his serious, almost

anxious mien. He stood before me in his shirt-sleeves, twisting a long silver chain round his waist. His eyebrows were knitted in deep thought, and I could see that he was revolving great ideas.

"X": "You mean about Chamberlain? I have not read his speech yet, but it looks as though he were going in for Protection."

CHURCHILL (walking up and down the room in agitation): "Of course he is going in for Protection. What will be the end of it all? Heaven only knows." Then, pausing before me, "Are you a Free Trader?"

"X": "Of course, anyone who has had an elementary education must believe that Free Trade is the only just and reasonable policy. But whether private interests are going to prevail and make Protection the popular cry, I have no means of knowing."

CHURCHILL: "It can never be a popular cry. It is foredoomed to failure. But we are in for a big fight. Joe will stick at nothing to carry it through. He will use all his influence. He will bribe the landlords. Already he has offered old age pensions as a bait to the poor. He will multiply all manner of devices. But he has committed an irreparable blunder. He cannot have realized all the consequences of his action. Talk of an old man in a hurry. . . . I believe it will be the death warrant of his career. No doubt he will obtain support from many strong men, *many rich men.*" (These words he pronounced in loud, threatening tones, as though conveying a warning of the dangers which would confront opponents of the new policy). "But he is bound to be beaten. The country will never stand a tax upon food, and without a tax upon food, protection is impossible. The masses know too well, for their fathers have told them from bitter experience, what frightful sufferings,



what famine, what poverty what starvation are the inevitable consequences of such a policy."

"X.": "Then what will you do?"

CHURCHILL: "Do! The accursed thing must be fought, it must be denounced from every platform. It must be resisted as we would resist the coming of some loathsome pestilence." (With growing excitement) "It will mean the break up of the Unionist Party. But whose will be the fault? Whose will be the responsibility? This great iconoclast has already broken up one party; he will not shrink from destroying another."

"X." "Then shall we have to go over to the other side?"

CHURCHILL: "Who can tell what may happen? The position is hedged in with perplexity; it bristles with difficulties. It may mean the end of their career for those who are bold enough to stand up against this powerful minister. Time alone can tell what will happen. All that can be said at present is that we are confronted by a perilous crisis in the history of our party, in the history of our country."

I had many opportunities of discussing this topic with him as Chamberlain's campaign developed itself. I think that at first he anticipated a larger secession of Unionist members of parliament than actually took place. But he never wavered in his confidence that the country would unhesitatingly reject the fiscal revolution which had been so suddenly proposed. He never swerved nor faltered, but, as time went on, he realized more and more the toughness of the fight which lay before him. It evidently enlarged his horizon and added fresh qualities to his political character. Becoming more and more independent, emancipating himself more completely from the party machine, he acquired a self-restraint and sense of respon-

sibility which belong only to party leaders. I observed this development particularly at his meetings, where at first he was unable or unwilling to shake off party trammels unreservedly; but where, later on, he revealed himself in the light of a maker of history. This development was particularly conspicuous to those who, like myself, had the privilege of sharing his platform at Birmingham and the Alexandra Palace. At Birmingham it was part of his brief to state his case as a supporter of the Government which he afterwards saw fit to repudiate. Considering the locality and circumstances, this was perhaps as well. Else, instead of a few broken windows and the muffled roar of a crowd in the square outside, he might have encountered those threats of personal violence which compelled Lloyd George to escape from the same place in the disguise of a policeman.

I remember, after this meeting, when we were making our way down the passage at the back of the hall, intending to return to the hotel for supper, the police seriously advised us to wait until the hubbub was over outside. The ferocity of Birmingham mobs is well known, and it seemed worth while to discuss the point; but Lady Randolph Churchill, being more courageous than patient, quietly pushed her way in front, opened the door and marched out, saying, "I don't suppose they will attack a woman." And, oddly enough, they did not. There was a sudden hush of the roaring crowd, a tense gasp of astonishment, and nothing happened beyond a few boos and cat-calls.

At the Alexandra Palace, where he was welcomed by the Liberals as a new ally rather than a new recruit, he spoke with greater freedom and it was interesting to observe the birth of an enthusiasm for a recruit who was destined to become a leader.

His self-restraint was well illustrated by his oratorical gestures. With every appearance of calm, holding himself perfectly upright, he made use of his hands and arms in a very telling manner; and I could never make up my mind whether his action was entirely spontaneous or whether, like most of his other expressions, it was the offspring of profound thought. Sometimes, in an unexpected outburst of enthusiasm, I have seen him caught in the middle of an elaborate gesture, say with his arms extended and his mouth wide open, reminding one of a cataract suddenly solidified. Meanwhile, I could almost see the next word poised upon the tip of his tongue, ready to be launched at precisely the right moment.

In this and other ways, his speeches always show traces of careful preparation; but so skilfully are they designed that even the most polished epigrams seem to be spontaneous. His extraordinary readiness of repartee, the instantaneous way in which he seizes upon an interruption and the lightness of heart whereby he transfigures even the most serious subject, exhibit an even greater excellence in his impromptus than is to be found in his more arduous efforts. What could be happier, for instance, than his playful retort at the Alexandra Palace? "Some kind people," he began, "have been kind enough to tell me that I ought to go over and join the Liberal party."

From all parts of the crowded hall came exuberant shouts of, "Why don't you?"

He put his head on one side in a very comical way, and there was a droll twinkle in his eyes, which tempted me to believe that he had anticipated some such commentary. With a rollicking affectation of surprise, he retorted, "That is not a bad idea." Then after a pause and a tempest of cheering, "I will give it my best consideration."

casual allusion may suffice to estrange someone who would otherwise be an enthusiastic and valued supporter.

CHURCHILL (smiling): "We must not exaggerate the importance of our ephemeral utterances. When I first began to make speeches, I was in a fever lest someone should haul me over the coals for a verbal or trivial contradiction. Then I soon found that the greater part of a speech goes in at one ear and comes out of the other. A man pays us the compliment of coming to a meeting and listening more or less attentively to what we have to say. But he does not study our books with a blue pencil in his hand, or paste a report on every speech in a scrap book."

"X.": "But if there be found even one just man to bring us to repentance in this way, he may make it very awkward for us by his questions."

CHURCHILL: "No. No! You can always silence a questioner, though it be only by a bad joke. Life would be too short if we had to set so rigid a watch upon our lips as all that. Besides which if we were always calculating and hesitating over the precise effect, the painful consistency of every sentence, we should cease to be natural and spontaneous and therefore to be convincing. Never take yourself more seriously than other people do. You must not mistake the hustings for the witness-box or the confessional. It is quite enough if you are honest to yourself and state your beliefs frankly on broad general lines. There are plenty of greater gifts and higher forms of truthfulness than meticulous consistency."

"X.": "I remember your father saying to me once, 'Never revise your speeches. If you are ever reproached with an inconvenient expression, you can always say that you have been badly reported.'"

CHURCHILL: "Besides, life would be much too short

if we had to turn ourselves into amateur reporters as well. A public speaker provides the raw material for the reporter, who then manufactures it according to his ability. It lies with him to send us forth to the world as finished orators, resplendent in our gift of tongues, or as stuttering exponents of bald, unconvincing commonplaces. You are no more responsible for a published report than you are for the success of an artist or a photographer, to whom you have been given a sitting."

On another occasion I mentioned to him the severe criticisms which had been passed upon me for a change of party which I did not imagine to embrace a change of principles.

CHURCHILL: "Everybody changes nowadays. Look at Balfour. I remember going to the House of Commons when I was a boy, and hearing him denounce the unconstitutional practice of closure by guillotine. I came away mightily impressed and I thought to myself: 'Here at least is a statesman who will spare no effort in combatting this monstrous invasion of the privileges of Parliament.' That was when his party was in opposition. I remember also how persuasive he was in his condemnation of the principle of Irish land purchase, and yet I have seen him defending that very same principle with the same old arguments which he had proclaimed to be unworthy of notice. Believe me, the average modern politician cares very little about consistency. He produces an assortment of wares with which to tempt the public, but so soon as the interest in them has declined, he quietly sets himself to work to dress the window with still later novelties. So long as he can sell something for the votes, upon which he depends for a livelihood, he is quite content. I dare-say politics are regarded by most people as a game in which the cleverest sharper wins. But I confess that I



really do feel angry when I observe the monstrous and cynical manner in which public personages too often regard public expenditure. In writing my father's life, I have been greatly impressed by a study of the old budgets. There you found ministers struggling and scraping and using all their utmost endeavors to effect savings, however apparently trivial. Now the public is regarded merely as a milch-cow, from whom the utmost possible must be extracted. Money is spent right and left with that insane generosity begotten of disregard for other people's pockets. That is a question which must not be treated as a game. We cannot afford to pass over the imminent menace of ruin as though extravagance were merely a move in the contest between the ins and the outs."

During my candidature at A——, Mr. Churchill wrote me a letter on some of these points, which I issued as a leaflet:

My dear X. . . .

I read with much amusement a spiteful letter about you in a Kent paper. I should refuse to be responsible in any way for opinions you have expressed in your capacity as a literary man. You should say that your business was to interest the public, and to amuse the public, and to present different points of view to the public; that sometimes you stated a point of view in an extravagant form in order to discredit it; that literary work must be judged on its literary merits and can necessarily have no connection with serious political utterances gravely considered beforehand, and submitted to the judgment of the electors.

Yours very truly,

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.

My old friend Mr. Evelyn of Wotton, who helped me very considerably with my candidature, was anxious about his only son. He was a good boy, but not very intelligent; but there seemed to be a danger that his posi-

tion and influence might be used for furthering the stupidities of Balfourism. I suggested that it would be useful if I could arrange for him to have a talk with Mr. Churchill<sup>and</sup> imbibe some political verities. Accordingly, on June 20, 1904, I took him to the House of Commons. Mr. Churchill met us in the Lobby, appearing more than ordinarily cheerful, and we went down with him to the terrace. As we passed through the knots of legislators and the be vies of ladies, I marked the general interest which he aroused. All turned to observe him, the greater part with a smile of approval. He seemed little concerned with the attention which he aroused but led the way with many a merry quip. When we emerged upon the terrace, a strong wind was agitating the river. Every seat being taken in that part of the terrace, which is reserved for members of the lower Chamber, we took possession of a table which had been assigned to the House of Lords. Here a difficulty arose, for the servants refused to supply us with refreshment there. An amicable parley ensued, the Commons' servants declaring that they were not permitted to cross an imaginary line.

CHURCHILL (smiling and pointing to the floor): "Very well; put the tea down there and I will carry it across myself."

He drew our attention to a pigeon which hopped familiarly upon the balustrade, and for some minutes he concentrated his attention upon its perky movements. Then remarked upon the pleasures of the view, "surely" (said he) "one of the most agreeable in London." His eyes wandered away to the throng of tea-drinkers which stretched away in a variegated blur. "If I had my way," said he, "I would abolish all this nonsense. The House of Commons should be a place of business, not a place of entertainment. Many members make this the one

resort of their hospitality. Tea on the Terrace!" he chuckled to himself. Here our tea arrived and he asked the servants whether it had come from the House of Commons kitchen. Receiving an affirmative reply, he assumed an air of satisfaction. I drew his attention to the fact that he usually contrived to have his own way.

Talking of the prospects of a dissolution, he observed, "Any other government would have been out long ago. But Balfour has more lives than any cat. He affords a striking refutation of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. But I am in no hurry for a dissolution. The longer he hangs on the better I shall be pleased."

Here a division bell rang, and he went off to discover whether it concerned the Lords or the Commons. A servant informed him that it was the Commons. I asked him whether we should wait for him or rejoin him in the Lobby.

CHURCHILL (reflecting): "I'll come back. No, on the whole I think I won't go. I don't know what it's about, and I have to be very careful over my votes now that I am an independent member."

As we all rose to withdraw, I inquired, "Which is my best way to get out? Shall I follow you?"

CHURCHILL: "Yes, always follow me as your true guide, philosopher and friend."

"X.": "Why, yes; but I intend to follow you in order to get in not to get out."

On another occasion, when I was beginning to worry over all the election pledges to which I had committed myself, I happened to remark upon the difficulty of wriggling out of them.

"Why should you want to wriggle out of them?" said he. "Never you mind about that. What you have to do is to wriggle in."

When Mr. Churchill was Under-Secretary for the Colonies, Arthur Pearson, whose sense of humor was never his strongest point, thought Protection would be helped by ignoring its most formidable opponents. So he issued a decree that Mr. Churchill should never be mentioned by name in the *Daily Express*. If allusion could not be avoided altogether, then "the Under-Secretary for the Colonies" must suffice, or some vulgar nickname like "the corner-boy." Of course, this really did not matter very much, but it was irritating and I reflected that all Mr. Churchill's bitter opponents were people who had never met him; nobody could resist the fascination of his personality. So I asked the two to meet at lunch at the Café Royal and the result was that each acquired golden opinions of the other. The "corner-boy" foolishness was dropped and, though ordinary criticism continued, it was conducted with ordinary decency.

During a long acquaintance with Mr. Churchill, extending over many years, I have always found him ready to do me a kindness at whatever inconvenience to himself; and I have found, contrary to the notion of many people who do not know him, that his innate amiability has been extended to all sorts of vague acquaintances with no claim whatever upon him. For instance, a friend of mine who was in the same house with him at Harrow, but did not enter his orbit afterward, told me that, long years later, he had only to write for help or advice in order to receive prompt satisfaction.

In my case, quite apart from politics or any possibility of my proving useful, he has never refused to give me introductions to helpful people or to assist my schemes with his valuable advice.

For instance, I once had a fancy to make the acquaintance of Lord Northcliffe, and I had scarcely mentioned

the matter when Mr. Churchill wrote a letter to that colossus of modern journalism saying he thought it would be worth his while to meet me. Accordingly, I was immediately summoned to the office of the *Times*, and ushered by a succession of bowing flunkeys and obsequious secretaries to the presence of the great man. I found him in what might have been the luxurious library of a country house. There was nothing journalistic about the room, which was chiefly furnished with a deep settee and a few huge armchairs of soft leather. Northcliffe was a surprise to me. I had expected to find a harsh, grim, abrupt person with a close-set mouth and penetrating eyes. Instead of this, a youngish, simple looking man with the appearance of an overgrown schoolboy, chubby cheeked and untidy with a wisp of hair over his forehead, rose and greeted me like an old friend. He was full of pleasant smiles as he shook hands and arranged an armchair for me opposite his settee.

Then he lay back, lit a cigar and began talking without method about everything that entered his head. Gradually he came to the subject of journalism and made some comparisons about the old and the new. He said, "I don't know whether you happened to see an article in the *Times* this morning on that subject."

I said I had read it very carefully and been much impressed by it. The whole question had been dealt with so lucidly and convincingly and at the same time with so much strength and reserve. . . . I warmed to the subject and enlarged upon it at considerable length. He lay back puffing his cigar and smiling benevolently as he encouraged me to go on talking about it. At last he said: "I wrote that article myself." That was a great surprise to me, for I had always heard he was incapable of string-



ing two words together, and really this article had been very well done.

After about an hour's conversation he said, "Why don't you write for some of my papers? I haven't any vacancy at present, but I can always make one. There is always room at the top."

Then I told him that the only thing which interested me at the time was foreign affairs, and that what I should like would be for him to appoint me Minister for Foreign Affairs to the government of all his papers. He did not seem at all surprised by what he probably considered the vast ambition of this proposal, but proceeded to discuss foreign questions with far more insight into them than I should have expected from him. Eventually he declared that he would consider the matter very carefully and would be glad if I developed my ideas and communicated them to him from time to time.

But would my letters reach him?

"Oh! yes, I had better tell you about that. When you want to write to me privately, put your letter into one envelope and address it to me. Then put that envelope into a second one and address it to me also. That is my code of privacy and none of my secretaries ever interfere with such correspondence."

When I saw Mr. Churchill after my interview with Lord Northcliffe I mentioned my impression of an odd strain of madness which I thought I had detected in his small peculiarities of manner and lack of concentration. Mr. Churchill proceeded to borrow the phrase about Buonaparte's alleged madness, and said, "If he is mad, I only wish he would bite some of our generals."

Another of Mr. Churchill's introductions was to Ernest Beckett, afterwards Lord Grimthorpe. In his letter he described me as "neither fearing God nor regarding man;"

which I told him was rather an exaggerated compliment. Beckett was an odd amiable person, who might have done much more, or probably much less, if he had not been so lavishly endowed with money. He was naturally lazy and preëminently a devotee of the good things of this life. But he certainly possessed abilities considerably above the average, and though he was not widely read, nor particularly well informed, he could make fairly good speeches and hold the ear of the House of Commons and rally clever people round him. At one time it seemed as though he were destined to play the kind of rôle which Lord George Bentinck played towards Disraeli. He was the host and nominal leader of the new Fourth party with Mr. Churchill as its life and soul.

I remember quite a funny joke which was played upon dear old Campbell-Bannerman in the House before Balfour gave up his premiership. Somebody quoted from one of Beckett's speeches with the remark, "These are the words of the Leader of the Opposition." C. B. fell into the trap at once, jumping up from the front Opposition Bench and exclaiming, "Sir, I never said anything of the kind." Whereupon his tormentor retorted coldly in mock surprise, "I was not referring to the Right Honorable gentleman. I said the Leader of the Opposition, by which I naturally meant the honorable member for Grimsby—" (Beckett).

I do not know when I have enjoyed such wonderful banquets as Beckett provided in his gorgeous flat in Stratton Street while he was nursing this new Fourth Party. They were banquets which would have made Lucullus green with envy if he could have survived to our day. And all the people I met there were interesting. They included Sir John Gorst, who had been the wisest of Lord Randolph Churchill's original Fourth Party;

Sir John Dickson Poynder, afterwards Lord Islington, whom I remembered as a modest small boy at a private school and a modest gambler at Monte Carlo; Coningsby Disraeli, with reminiscences of the alarming reserve of his famous uncle; oily, overrated Harry Cust, belying his reputation for cleverness.

My next introduction from Mr. Churchill was to General Grey during the war. He was in control of the communications between Taranto and Havre, and I thought I might have made myself useful as an interpreter. The General received me at his hotel in Rome with great affability but did not happen to want interpreters, which surprised me later on when I had experience of the lamentable absence of them on troop trains.

Grey surveyed me cheerfully almost with the eye of a man about to make a purchase in a slave-market.

"How old are you?" he asked abruptly.

When I told him I was fifty-one he gaped with incredulous surprise, which did not abate when I explained that my apparent youthfulness was due to a good conscience.

"I should rather have put you down as a youngster who had been on the racket," was his verdict.

Another introduction was to Lord Beaverbrook in 1918, when he was Minister of Propaganda. There I thought I should certainly be welcome, but again I was doomed to disappointment. Beaverbrook proved an odd, little brown man, very genial and full of alertness. He talked for about ten minutes about matters which had nothing to do with propaganda, such as pre-war politics. When I mentioned that I had followed Mr. Churchill into the Radical ranks on the question of Protection, he said, "Then we are in opposite camps", and I was not successful in persuading him that party politics had by that time ceased to exist.

He passed me on to Colonel Buchan, who proved even more genial, and told me that he had been a Jacobite long years before. His ardor for that cause had somewhat abated in consequence of the activities of Prince Rupert of Bavaria (the Jacobite Duke of Cornwall) on the enemy's side, but he assured me that he still cherished the old ideas. What was more important, he seemed quite anxious to make use of my services, almost giving me my choice of the job I preferred. I understood that, in course of posts, I should be sent out to Rome to influence Italian public opinion in our favor. Weeks, however, passed and I heard nothing, though I called repeatedly and persuaded friends in high places to importune Buchan on the telephone. At last I was informed that he had long been transferred to another department and his successor, a recruit from Reuter's bureau, took no interest whatever in my wishes.

Then all of a sudden, as I was losing all faith in the Ministry of Propaganda, I received an invitation from Blumenfeld, the editor of the *Daily Express*, to call at his office. I found a strange person, who talked American slang which I found difficult to understand; or else he drifted into a sort of conversational shorthand. For instance, instead of saying, "no," he had a way of twisting his mouth into an "o." A common friend told me afterwards that he had the pen of a very ready writer and that she had asked him why he did not sign his wonderful articles instead of hiding his light under a bushel.

"My dear lady," was his answer, "how could I sign my articles—during the war—with my name?"

When he proceeded to send me out to Scandinavia for his paper, I found his name did arouse a certain amount of suspicion with the alien officials at Aberdeen; but he

seemed to enjoy the confidence of the Propaganda people at the Foreign Office and I found to my surprise that he was actually a member of the Carlton Club. I found, also to my surprise, that when by the exercise of consummate craft I had secured a permit to visit Finland in war-time and had penetrated to Haparanda, on the confines of the Arctic Circle, he grew frightened by the cost of my journey, telegraphing, "Altogether too expensive; come home at once." This, though famine prices ruled in Scandinavia and my commission had embraced an assurance that money was not to be spared.

The first time I saw Mr. Churchill after my return from the wars he took my breath away. I had to walk a long distance from the door to his table in his room at the War Office, and I was impressed by the change in his appearance and demeanor during more than four years of wearing anxiety. He had certainly aged, and a solemn spirit seemed to have overshadowed the boyish buoyancy, which I had known and loved so well. He watched me in silence for long moments. Then he suddenly exclaimed, "I congratulate you!"

What on earth for? I wondered to myself. He had earned the congratulations of the civilized world by saving England from invasion and by devising master-strokes, which, if properly supported by competent officers, would have considerably shortened the period of hostilities. But what had I done to deserve congratulation?

"I congratulate you," he went on in those wonderful accents with which he is wont to move multitudes; "I congratulate you on having survived this stupendous cataclysm, which has swept over the world, shattering the proudest reputations, destroying the fairest provinces, obliterating the most ancient empires. . . ."



I was too much taken aback to memorize the rest of his limpid periods. I could only realize that he was congratulating me on being yet alive. I could only assure him that life must remain sweet so long as I had the privilege of retaining his friendship.

THE END.











B-V 858

## BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

This Book may be kept 14 days from  
the last date stamped below.

A fine of 2 CENTS will be charged for each day the Book is kept beyond that time.

[illegible]

in Ds. Nf. 65M-1-25 E. B.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 4444 04767 2555

**Brooklyn  
Public Library  
Montague Branch**

197 Montague St.

Tel. M. 2-2773

Week days, 9 A. M. to 9 P. M.  
Sundays and Holidays, 4 to 6 P. M.  
Christmas, 10 A. M. to 12 M.

**Regulations**

Any inhabitant of New York may take books from the Library. Books not in general demand may be loaned for 30 days. The time for which other books may be loaned may be limited, at the discretion of the Librarian, to 3, 7 or 14 days according to demand. The length of time for which a book is issued is clearly indicated on the dating slip.

Any book, except those designated "three" or "seven-day books," current numbers of magazines and books which have been reserved for another borrower, may be renewed for the same length of time as that for which it was originally issued.

When renewing book by mail or telephone give title, number, and date charged.

Each book kept overtime is subject to a fine of two cents a day until its return; if retained two weeks overtime it will be sent for at the borrower's expense. Books should be examined for mutilations, etc., at the time of borrowing, as the last borrower must be held responsible.



BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 4444 04767 2555